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Liberalism, Nationalism and anti-Semitism in the  
'Berlin anti-Semitism Dispute' of 1879/1880

A thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract: Liberalism, Nationalism and anti-Semitism in the 'Berlin anti-Semitism Dispute' of 1879/1880, a thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Marcel Stoetzler

This thesis analyses the series of newspaper and journal articles and pamphlets published in 1879/1880 which constitute what came to be called the 'Berlin anti-Semitism dispute'. They were written by the German historian and politician Heinrich von Treitschke and some of the political and academic figures who responded to his anti-Jewish statements, and they discuss the anti-Semitic movement and the place of Jews in German society at that time.

Treitschke's texts have been seen as crucial to both the development of modern anti-Semitism in Germany and the emergence of a distinctly German form of nationalism. But the debate which they provoked also reveals a great deal about social and political thought at that time, and in particular the relationship between anti-Semitism and liberalism; most of the contributors were liberals like Treitschke, or opponents of liberalism.

As well as providing a close reading of the debate in a full-length study (something which has not been done before) this thesis also analyses it in terms of the wider issues of nationalism and liberalism. What emerges from this material is a conceptual weakness of liberalism in its relation to anti-Semitism and Jewish emancipation. Both Treitschke's support for anti-Semitism and the ambivalence evident in the views of his opponents are shown here to be rooted in the contradiction between inclusionary and exclusionary tendencies inherent in the nation-form. To the extent that liberal society constitutes itself in the form of a *national state*, it has to guarantee, or produce, some degree of homogeneity or conformity of a *national culture*. This necessity leads Treitschke to embrace, and his critics to be unable to fully oppose, anti-Semitism. In this respect the thesis aims to provide a starting point for a critical assessment of current debates on nationalism vs. patriotism, ethnic minorities and 'multi-cultural society'.



# Liberalism, Nationalism and anti-Semitism in the Berlin anti-Semitism Dispute of 1879/80

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## 1.1 Liberalism, nationalism and anti-Semitism in the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*: the thesis suggested

In November 1879, the German historian and National-Liberal politician, Heinrich von Treitschke, editor of the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, a prestigious and widely read scholarly-political journal, made some remarks in the concluding section of a review of current affairs in that journal that sparked what later came to be known as the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*, the *Berlin Anti-Semitism Dispute*.<sup>1</sup> Treitschke reflected on the anti-Jewish activities of some groups and individuals, particularly in Berlin, in a way that was generally understood to support and applaud the 'anti-Semitic' cause – a term that had only been coined in the same context earlier the same year. What I will subsequently refer to as the *Streit* is the series of pamphlets and newspaper articles published in Germany late in 1879 and throughout 1880-81 in response to the remarks made by Treitschke. The respondents included the philosopher Hermann Cohen, the social scientist Moritz Lazarus and the historians Heinrich Graetz and Theodor Mommsen. Treitschke wrote replies to some of his critics, some of whom replied in turn, to the effect that the whole material of the *Streit* constitutes a multi-layered, network-like 'poly'-logue on differing notions of the German nation, the role in it of the German Jews, and how 'German' the latter are. My analysis is based on the contributions by sixteen individuals, many of them figures whom the German public then held in high regard. Most contributions combine polemic with scholarly argument. The material's overall length is the equivalent of a small book. My thesis is the first study of the topic which combines a close and systematic reading of the source material with a theoretically informed interpretation.

The analysis and evaluation of the *Streit* about Treitschke's remarks on the Jews is of particular interest for two reasons:

- *firstly*, Treitschke's texts are notorious as the source of catchy anti-Semitic formulations (such as 'The Jews are our misfortune') and are generally acknowledged as crucial for the development of modern anti-Semitism in Germany. However, despite its notoriety the *Streit* has so far never been analyzed in a full-length study.

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<sup>1</sup> The text is documented in English translation in 4.1.

- *Secondly*, Treitschke's position is full of ambivalence and cannot easily be dismissed as that of an extremist, racist, illiberal demagogue. He is interesting particularly because he was *a figure of the centre, not the margins of society*. His opponents, some of whom were or had been friends, colleagues and/or political allies, acknowledge this either implicitly or explicitly and demonstrate difficulties in coping with Treitschke's ambivalence as well as the fact that they belong to the same social and political milieu. In the *Streit*, nationalist liberals respond to a fellow nationalist liberal's anti-Jewish remarks, while both sides remain committed to defending and helping to consolidate the newly founded German nation-state.

The emphasis of my discussion is on the *Streit* as a whole rather than on Treitschke's or any other single contribution. The text material is analysed with a view to its paradigmatic character for the discussion of modern society and history. My aim is not, however, to arrive at a 'theory of anti-Semitism'. It seems unlikely to me that such a theory could possibly be formulated, given the incoherent nature of the object. I suggest, however, that the analysis of *specific instances* of anti-Semitic attitudes or activities within their specific contexts – including most crucially how they were opposed or responded to – can contribute a lot to theorizing the nation and liberal state and society, which in turn are necessary preconditions for understanding anti-Semitism.

While the interventions in defence of emancipation – in particular Mommsen's – have sometimes been referred to as a victory of liberal values against illiberalism, it has also often been pointed out that both sides shared assumptions about the national state, emancipation and the status of cultural or ethnic minorities. In this sense, it has been felt – in particular by some in the Jewish community of the time – that much of what has been responded to Treitschke confirmed rather than challenged the fundamental premises of his position. My analysis will confirm this view and show that – Treitschke's embarrassment and temporary silence on the issue after 1881 notwithstanding – the *Streit* highlights a conceptual weakness of liberalism in its relation to anti-Semitism and Jewish emancipation.

My exploration of the *Streit* concentrates on two main questions: how does Treitschke – a liberal historian, political theorist and politician – come to give

support to anti-Semitism, and why – as this thesis will demonstrate – do the liberal critics of Treitschke's position remain ambiguous in the ways they address the issue? The analysis of the *Streit* that I propose looks for the answers to these questions in the relation between anti-Semitism and *state, nation and national culture*, i.e. institutions and structures central to liberal society.

The gist of my thesis is that Treitschke's support for anti-Semitism is rooted in the contradiction between inclusionary and exclusionary tendencies inherent in the 'nation-form'.<sup>2</sup> *National states* refer to and presuppose the existence of a *national culture*. To the extent that liberal society constitutes itself in the form of a nation-state,<sup>3</sup> it has to guarantee, or produce, some degree of cultural homogeneity or conformity – i.e. it has to enforce the assimilation of not-yet-conforming elements. If a considerable minority seems not to be assimilating, the nation-state's representatives will inevitably ask whether this minority is *prevented* from assimilating, *refuses* to, or is in itself *unable* to assimilate. Exactly these questions are pivotal to the *Berlin Anti-Semitism Dispute*.

I suggest that Treitschke's support for anti-Semitism is a symptom of contradictions intrinsic to liberal society, by which is understood a modern form of society characterised by the duality and interplay of a 'civil society' and a 'liberal state'. Anti-Semitism develops from within, it is not a challenge coming from somewhere 'outside' that society and its values. To the extent that anti-Semitism is anti-liberal, it is an element of the self-negation of liberal society. In anti-Semitism, liberal society revokes its promise to gradually expand emancipation to all groups of the population.

*Liberalism* is understood here to be a tradition of modern thinking that is as much concerned with individuals (rights-bearing subjects who are owners and sellers of commodities)<sup>4</sup> as with how best to construct the state they form in line with their specific needs and interests. Liberal theory often asserts, and always

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<sup>2</sup> I take this word from Balibar (1991a;b). 'Nation-form' implies that 'the nation' is a social form, i.e. the form taken by a specific kind of (modern) state and society.

<sup>3</sup> In the same vein, I understand 'the state' to be the specific (institutional) *form* taken by a specific society. This use of the concept 'form' implies, *vice versa*, that society in its totality is understood to be the 'essence' of the state, i.e. the social-historical dynamism whose specific (if not exclusive) institutional expression is 'the state'.

<sup>4</sup> At the very least, the commodity is that of labour-power.



implies, that in order to make it meet the needs of an association of individuals of selfish interests the state must be provided with an ethos of belonging and a sense of 'us', which is typically referred to as 'the nation'. Liberalism without some form of *nationalism*<sup>5</sup> is therefore an impossibility.

The *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* followed the coining of the word 'anti-Semitism' and the emergence of an 'anti-Semitic movement' (although it predated its development into differentiated and programmatically articulated political organization). It was in the first place a debate *about* the nascent anti-Semitic movement and did not involve the protagonists of this movement as participants.<sup>6</sup> This reflects the specific social location of the *Streit*: mainly professors, politicians, priests and rabbis exchange extended and elaborate statements. The social exclusiveness of most of the contributors and their style must have limited the *immediate* impact of the debate, but it also contributed to its *long term* relevance: the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* features members of the educated élite in an effort to make sense of a new key-word that had been coined in a lower middle class milieu and had populist connotations. In a society that held scholars and intellectuals in as high prestige as the German *Reich* in Bismarck's time, such an exchange was bound to have a lasting impact.

On the face of it, the case of anti-Semitism seems anachronistic: the Jews were being attacked for something that most of them were just in the process of ceasing to be – distinctly Jewish. Indeed, many contemporaries saw anti-Semitism as a temporary revival of 'medieval' superstition. However, despite its anachronistic and irrational appearance, anti-Semitism was 'modern' in the sense that it referred to and drew its meaning from contemporary social reality. The most widely noticed ambivalence in Treitschke's argument was that between the demand for the Jews to accelerate their assimilation and – at the same time – the (less explicitly stated) demand for their social exclusion. Anti-Semitism responded to the twin process of Jewish emancipation and assimilation. The

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<sup>5</sup> I consider 'patriotism' a near-synonym that differs only insofar that it tends to carry an implicit claim to a high degree of individual, rather than collective, commitment. This seems to be an echo of the original implication of a personal relation to a *pater patriae*; the word *Landesvater* is still used in German along with *Vaterland*.

<sup>6</sup> The only exception was Naudh.

discussants of the *Streit* argued about whether anti-Semitic agitation would push the Jews to *accelerate* (Treitschke's view) or would *obstruct* and slow down assimilation (most others' view).

The subject of the thesis that aims to situate the question of 'anti-Semitism' within that of (modern) state and society is located at the intersection of several scholarly discourses: the social and political history of the emancipation of the German Jews and the 'anti-Semitic' reaction against it; the social and political history of the German state; the intellectual history of nationalism and liberalism in Germany; and the social theory of the modern state and its relation to society and individual in liberal theory.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> I include only texts written in 1879, 1880 or 1881 which refer to one of Treitschke's statements. The initial working through of the text material resulted in a list of concepts on which the *Streit* is pivoted. These are introduced historically-conceptually in *Part One*. The presentation and discussion of the text material in *Part Two* is designed to throw light on each of these concepts and their interconnections. *Part Three* aims to draw together Parts One and Two.

## 1.2 Review: The 'Berliner Antisemitismusstreit' in the literature

Despite its fame, the number of contributions that deal specifically and in detail with the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* is small, and even within their number only few discuss more than one or two of the contributors, usually the better known ones, namely Treitschke, Mommsen and Graetz, followed by Cohen and Lazarus.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, some reference to the *Streit* can be found in almost every publication on anti-Semitism, in most publications on German-Jewish history, in many on German history, in some on the history of liberalism and that of German historiography, and in contributions on individuals like Treitschke or Mommsen. This contradiction between on the one hand, the semblance of familiarity and on the other hand, a shortage of detailed and specific presentation and examination, characterizes the state of the scholarship on the *Streit*.

The 'Berliner Antisemitismusstreit' is widely seen as an event of decisive significance for

- the development or emergence of 'modern anti-Semitism', i.e. the transformation of 'traditional Jew-hatred' into whatever different authors suggest is its late nineteenth century variant or successor; and,
- the development of *liberalism*, usually of German liberalism in particular, and its relation to *nationalism*.

The questions or perspectives that most commonly inform discussions of the *Streit* are:

- Is Treitschke's concern mainly with the *nation-state*, with *religion* or with *race*?
- Was Treitschke's intention to contribute to an acceleration of *assimilation*, or was he aiming at the *exclusion* of the Jews?
- Was Treitschke a liberal or had he stopped being a liberal at some time before?
- In what way did Treitschke's intervention change the 'respectability' of anti-Semitism?

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<sup>8</sup> Discussions of the *Streit* that include a larger number of contributors are few (Boehlich 1965b; Meyer 1966; Claussen 1987; Lenk 1988; Abraham 1992; Hoffmann 1997; Langer 1998; Salecker 1999). A detailed textual analysis has only been done for Treitschke's first contribution (Holz 2001).

- How different is Mommsen's position from Treitschke's? How different are Lazarus' and Cohen's positions from Treitschke's? How do all of the former relate to Graetz?
- Was Treitschke's intervention (in respect to any of the issues listed above) novel and original, or is it merely a particularly visible articulation of something older or more general?

Furthermore, almost all contributions note that there is some form of 'ambivalence' in Treitschke's position (and many state the same for Mommsen). However, not much has explicitly been said about the nature of that 'ambivalence', nor is there much systematic discussion of how nationalism, anti-Semitism and liberalism relate to each other.<sup>9</sup>

Very few authors see Treitschke without qualification as a representative of racist anti-Semitism; Boehlich (1965b)<sup>10</sup> states that Treitschke's views are not essentially different from those of clerical and racial anti-Semites, Berding (1988)<sup>11</sup> argues that Treitschke rejected racial and clerical anti-Semitism only verbally. Rose (1992)<sup>12</sup> similarly calls it a 'dishonesty' for Treitschke to argue for assimilation when at the same time he finds it to be not really possible.

<sup>9</sup> The more theoretically informed contributions are Claussen 1987; Abraham 1992; Claussen 1994a; Salecker 1999; Holz 2001.

<sup>10</sup> In his postscript to the edited volume, 'Der Berliner Antisemitismusstreit' Walter Boehlich emphasizes that Treitschke formulated an 'anti-Semitism that could claim not to be anti-Semitic' (1965b:238). He points out that Treitschke did not think of himself as an anti-Semite 'but his opponents as well as his supporters did' (ibid.:240). He implicitly suggests that the 'liberal sounding' elements in Treitschke's language are but rhetoric and argues that 'decidedly anti-Semitic utterances' can be found in Treitschke's writing as early as 1866 (ibid.:242). Boehlich asserts that Treitschke's anti-Semitism is 'a variant of speculative nationalism' (ibid.:243).

<sup>11</sup> Helmut Berding describes the *Streit* as a 'prelude' to the anti-Semitic campaigns of the 1880s. He points out that Treitschke's relationship to Jewry and Judaism had always been 'ambivalent' (Berding 1988:113). He argues that in the changed climate of 1879, Treitschke's support for emancipation was gradually eclipsed by 'discontent' with the Jews not having 'totally amalgamated with the German majority' (ibid.:114). Berding asserts that, although Treitschke rejected the more explicitly racist articulations of anti-Semitism, 'he used the same phrases to the same effects' (ibid.:114f).

<sup>12</sup> Paul Lawrence Rose mentions Treitschke as a representative of 'the statist approach to the Jewish question' (Rose 1992:90), apparently implying a distance from what is the main theme of his book, the 'German revolutionary tradition' of anti-Semitism (a rather unhelpful category that seems to be adapted from Jacob L. Talmon's theory of the allegedly 'totalitarian' character of the 'Jacobin tradition' of European political thought [cp. ibid.:382], into which he includes 'Kant, Marx, Humboldt, Herder, or Wagner' [ibid.:381]). Rose underlines that Treitschke 'was willing to confer civil rights on the Jews' in exchange for 'destruction of their Jewish identity' (ibid.:90). As long as the latter had not been completed, however, and in proportion to it, Treitschke 'insist(ed) (like Dohm) on continuing a certain measure of administrative discrimination against them'. Rose points out 'a certain dishonesty' in this position, since Treitschke also believed that complete assimilation was actually impossible for the Jews.

Almog (1990)<sup>13</sup> acknowledges that Treitschke held racial views but was only intent on reducing the Jews' influence for the sake of national cohesion.

By contrast, there are some who understand Treitschke not to have employed a concept of race at all; these include Meyer (1966),<sup>14</sup> Pickus (1994),<sup>15</sup> Kohn (1961),<sup>16</sup> Stern (1977),<sup>17</sup> Schulze (1996)<sup>18</sup> and Hammerstein (1995).<sup>19</sup> All of them see Treitschke's concern being with the nation (religion being a subordinate issue). Liebeschuetz (1962)<sup>20</sup> argues that Treitschke asserts religion for merely secular, namely nationalist ends. Zucker (1972)<sup>21</sup> holds that for Treitschke, like for Mommsen, nation and religion were intertwined issues.

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<sup>13</sup> *Shmuel Almog* states that Treitschke only 'seemingly dissociat(ed) himself from the crude manifestations of antisemitism in its vulgar form' (Almog 1990:34) while actually welcoming them. However, he 'did not seek to alter the status of the Jews, merely to reduce their influence' (ibid.:35). Almog depicts Treitschke as driven by a concern about 'mass immigration from the East' and its effects on national cohesion.

<sup>14</sup> *Michael A. Meyer* asserts that 'Treitschke's criticism of German Jewry arises neither from racism nor from a desire to strengthen Christianity' but mainly from a concern 'with the strength of the nation' (Meyer 1966:144f): 'Since he equates diversity with divisiveness, he must consider the Jews a distinct danger to German national life' (ibid.:145).

<sup>15</sup> *Keith H. Pickus* argues that the distinction Treitschke makes between the Sephardic Jews in France, England and Italy on the one hand, and the 'Ostjuden' in Germany on the other hand indicates that Treitschke's anti-Jewish outlook is not based on a concept of race. Pickus argues that it is only the *national* character of Germans and of 'Eastern Jews' that makes impossible the latter's assimilation to the former (Pickus 1994:68).

<sup>16</sup> *Hans Kohn* emphasizes that Treitschke 'never went so far as other German writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century' nor participated in any 'excesses' (Kohn 1961[1946]:116).

<sup>17</sup> *Fritz Stern* sees Treitschke's stance as 'but a reassertion of his devotion to the German state'. Like Stöcker, Treitschke 'professed as much worry about German weakness as about Jewish strength' (Stern 1977:512), but 'neither Treitschke nor Stöcker was a racist; all that Treitschke asked for was a Christian German nation. Outsiders were enemies, clever and unscrupulous outsiders were worse enemies' (ibid.).

<sup>18</sup> *Hagen Schulze* stresses that unlike the racial anti-Semitism of Chamberlain and Gobineau, 'Treitschke's anti-Semitism was confined to the argument of national integration' (Schulze 1996:258). He sees Treitschke's articles as part of a process in which 'popular anti-Semitism, nourished by economic factors, was combined with acute cultural anti-Semitism as Jewish emigrants from the East ... made their way into Western Europe'.

<sup>19</sup> *Notker Hammerstein* sees 'Treitschke's malicious as well as somewhat naïve attack on the Jews' (Hammerstein 1995:54) as the characteristic expression of the 'confused mindset' of the German educated classes (*Bildungsbürgertum*) that believed that true intellectuality had to be rooted in community and belonging. Treitschke was driven by 'self-opinionated nationalism' not by 'racial-antisemitic convictions'.

<sup>20</sup> *Hans Liebeschütz* emphasises that the 'core of Treitschke's polemics is the Jewish ... will to preserve their own identity' (Liebeschütz 1962:172). 'Treitschke had persuaded himself that it was necessary to fear the Jews for the sake of the political future of the German monarchy' (ibid.:179). Liebeschütz underlines that both Treitschke and Mommsen 'demand undivided loyalty' to the modern nation-state (ibid.) and holds that Treitschke's 'emphasis on the religious aspect ... raises a problem' when at the same time 'his leading ideal, the power and health of the state, belonged to the secular sphere' (ibid.:173). For Liebeschütz, 'Treitschke did not profess a philosophy of racialism' (ibid.:156).

<sup>21</sup> *Stanley Zucker* underlines that for Treitschke as well as Mommsen, 'Christianity and modern nationalism were so intertwined that to be truly a national, one had to become a Christian' (Zucker 1972:237).

Pulzer (1988)<sup>22</sup> argues that Treitschke gave a merely indirect service to (racial) anti-Semitism by promoting aggressive national pride. Dorpalen (1957)<sup>23</sup> also stresses the predominance of nationalism when he notes that anti-Semitism had been latent in Treitschke's writings but became virulent only when it seemed opportune in a context defined by a concern with the nation. Mosse (1966)<sup>24</sup> writes that Treitschke's concern was nationalism but with a growing racial tendency. Iggers (1971)<sup>25</sup> as well as Reemtsma (1992)<sup>26</sup> also point to a

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<sup>22</sup> Peter Pulzer writes that 'the Jewish question' was only a minor issue in Treitschke's writing: 'His main services to anti-Semitism were indirect: he helped very materially to spread the type of coarse, brassy, aggressive national pride which, in the German context, was part of the emotional complex with which anti-Semitism was associated' (Pulzer 1988:243). Pulzer sees the 'evolution of his [Treitschke's] thought, from Saxon liberal to the high priest of Prussianism (which) excellently illustrates the tragic cleavage which entered between the German Liberal and national traditions after 1866' as the background of Treitschke's role in the *Streit* (ibid.:240).

<sup>23</sup> Andreas Dorpalen asserts that Treitschke had maintained in the 1860s 'an attitude of condescending tolerance towards the Jews' (Dorpalen 1957:241). Neither conservative attempts to discredit economic liberalism as Jewish nor Catholic attempts to denounce the 'Kulturkampf' as a Jewish maneuver 'made any noticeable impression on him' (ibid.:242). Only when 'antisemitism became a weapon of the Bismarck camp, did he feel called upon to intervene'. Dorpalen seems to imply that anti-Semitism had been latent in Treitschke, but became an issue only when it became opportune in the larger political context. But Treitschke 'shied away from the consequences of his [newly acquired] beliefs' (ibid.:243): still too much of a liberal, he did not support legal discrimination.

<sup>24</sup> George L. Mosse writes that the 'ambivalence' in Treitschke's position 'derived from his national considerations as well as his rejection of the total racial context' (Mosse 1966:200). Although Treitschke started out from the liberal belief in and support for assimilation, he gradually replaced this with the notion of Jewish unassimilability, which tends to lead towards a concept of racial particularity. Mosse emphasizes the relevance of the concept of 'youth' in Treitschke's thinking: Germany is a young nation; therefore she is still developing her strength and is less able to assimilate strangers (ibid.). Mosse concludes that Treitschke's anti-Semitism was 'völkish' with a tendency to becoming increasingly racist (ibid.:201).

<sup>25</sup> Georg Iggers sees Treitschke's anti-Semitism in the context of his increasing 'social conservatism' and points to a shift in his assessment of German Jews in the successive volumes of his 'German History in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century': Treitschke still 'condemned exaggerated xenophobia and *Deutschtümelei* of the 'gymnasts' (Turner) and fraternities' and restricted his anti-Jewish remarks to criticisms of the financial power of some Jewish companies in the second volume (published in 1882), but in the third volume (1885) the Jews were depicted as 'an element destroying German culture' (Iggers 1971:76). Although this seems to suggest a shift in Treitschke's attitude, Iggers also points out that both motives were present in Treitschke's writing at least as early as in 1869 (ibid.:73). Iggers argues that while Treitschke on the one hand explicitly attacks 'Ostjuden' (not assimilated 'Westjuden'), this apparent rejection of the terminology of race is undermined when on the other hand he attacks assimilated Jews as 'German speaking Orientals' (ibid.).

<sup>26</sup> Jan Philipp Reemtsma points out that Treitschke 'argues explicitly as a Christian' (1992:307). He asserts that Treitschke's anti-Semitism is as much religious as it is nationalist. Treitschke, so Reemtsma, does not attack legal emancipation nor does he demand conversion. When Treitschke demands that the Jews 'become Germans', he 'merely reformulates in a nationalist manner an idea that had formed the basis of many approvals of Jewish emancipation: giving up one's own traditions is the price for the ending of civil discrimination' (ibid.:308f). Reemtsma concludes that Treitschke's argument is anti-Jewish but appears not to be racist. However, Reemtsma also states that racialism is a 'subliminal (unterschiedliche) line of argument' with Treitschke (ibid.:309).



subliminal racism. Salecker (1999) argues that Treitschke's concern was primarily with 'culture'.<sup>27</sup>

Abraham (1992)<sup>28</sup> sees Treitschke using the concept of race but asserts that he argued for miscegenation not for 'racial purity'. Claussen (1987)<sup>29</sup> sees Treitschke's anti-Semitism as instrumental to an attack on the left wing of the National-Liberal party. Rosenberg (1930)<sup>30</sup> argues that Treitschke wants to

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<sup>27</sup> Hans-Joachim Salecker asserts that in the context of the *Streit*, the *Judenfrage* was a *Kulturfrage* not a *Rechtsfrage* (Salecker 1999:395). The question was whether or not the Jews made adequate use of their civil rights, and whether they needed to be taken care of by the state in a specific way 'like criminals or those of ill health'. He writes that Treitschke was not, however, a racist (ibid.:133).

<sup>28</sup> Gary A. Abraham holds that Treitschke's attitude towards the Jews 'contains both liberal and anti-Semitic elements' (Abraham 1992:93). It involved 'a subtle blurring of attributes of the traditional Jew and the assimilated Jew, respectively, into a single image' (ibid.:93f). Not unlike Stöcker's or Marr's, it combined 'many of the old, Christian-inspired charges' with 'new, essentially secular fears of national diversity' (ibid.:94). However, Treitschke's argument that complete assimilation is impossible and his 'willingness to live with this situation' shows that 'Treitschke is less than intolerant' (ibid.:95). Abraham points out that 'not far in the background in these discussions was the *Mischvolk* idea' (ibid.:97), i.e. the conception widespread in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and subsequently taken up by Max Weber) that a nation draws strength from having multiple cultural or racial origins. While most liberals interpreted the *Mischvolk* idea culturally, Treitschke and Cohen argued for racial mixing. Treitschke is therefore 'not a proponent of race purity'. Abraham points out that Treitschke's 'proposals for legislative exclusion of Jews' were designed to further 'miscegenation' (ibid.). His presentation implies that all sides 'proceeded on the assumption that national social unity was one of the most, if not the most, pressing needs of the time'. Their difference lay in the understanding of 'whether national "culture" is pluralist or unitary' (ibid.).

<sup>29</sup> Detlev Claussen asserts that Treitschke 'articulates the contradictions of German liberalism: in the conflict between nationality and liberality, the national remains triumphant' (Claussen 1987:130). He points out that Treitschke's opponents, like Treitschke himself, cannot but argue 'within the national framework'. Claussen suggests that this reflects the fact that liberal 'social progress' – although theoretically not national in character – has to realize itself within the limits of the concrete historical framework, which is that of the nation-state.

<sup>30</sup> Arthur Rosenberg points out that Treitschke 'demands very little from the German Jews' (Rosenberg 1930:78), namely assimilation and modesty. But although his program is 'apparently very harmless', Treitschke wants 'to prepare the ground for his own political and social world-view' by rejecting what Treitschke calls 'Jewish-German mixed culture'. Treitschke saw in Christianity the 'rejection of the bourgeois spirit' while he saw in 'the Jew' its 'most obvious (auffälligste) embodiment' (ibid.:80). Rosenberg links the *Streit* to an identity crisis of the German educated classes after 1871 when not the (organized) bourgeoisie but the Prussian state and military apparatus appeared to be the backbone of German national success. A part of the academic 'support troops of the bourgeoisie' now re-interpreted the bourgeoisie as greedy, particularist materialists and gradually endorsed an (invented) aristocratic life-ideal: 'aristocratic man does not indulge in haggling and usury but obediently serves Emperor and Fatherland. He does not mock but he believes. He secures discipline and morality in household and family, in community and state' (ibid.:80). 'Treitschke and his comrades in mind (Gesinnungsfreunde)' attacked 'the Jew' so heavily 'because they want to liberate themselves from the "Jew" that inhabits themselves'. Rosenberg distinguishes academic anti-Semitism from the economic anti-Semitism of the lower middle classes. Unlike the lower middle classes, academics were not threatened economically due to the restrictive and conservative routes of access to academic positions. Rosenberg also points out that anti-Semitism has not been a defining characteristic of Bismarck's outlook nor that of the aristocracy in general – dislike of Jews (but also of Gentile bourgeois *homines novi*) notwithstanding. Furthermore, Bismarck's struggle against the Liberals did not indicate a 'fundamental split with the bourgeoisie' (ibid.:82f). Rosenberg's analysis

promote a specific worldview in which the Jews represent 'bourgeois man'. Rosenberg interprets Treitschke's argument as rooted in an identity crisis of a section of the German educated classes who were under the impression that the Prussian aristocracy not the German bourgeoisie was leading the new state and aimed to reposition themselves on the winning side by adopting an 'aristocratic life ideal' opposed to bourgeois materialism and greediness (which the bourgeois seemed to share with the working class).

Few authors judge that Treitschke had clearly 'distanced himself' from the liberal tradition (Kampe 1987).<sup>31</sup> Nipperdey/Rürup (1972)<sup>32</sup> argue Treitschke opposed 'modern liberal society'; Hackeschmidt (1997)<sup>33</sup> asserts that Treitschke's demand for assimilation was 'hypocritical' since assimilation had already happened to a large extent.

Ragins<sup>34</sup> writes that Treitschke was 'a liberal with impeccable credentials' (Ragins 1980:15) whose concern was neither with race nor with religion but with the Jews' maintaining their national traits. Treitschke attacked the Jews from within liberalism. Lindemann also notes that Treitschke was a 'liberal in the

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implies that Treitschke's position is rooted in over-assimilating to the anti-liberalism of Bismarck's politics due to misinterpreting the nature of German Imperial society.

<sup>31</sup> Norbert Kampe holds that Treitschke's position in the *Streit* marked 'the end point of a ten-year process of distancing himself from Liberalism' (Kampe 1987:46). Kampe evaluates Treitschke's 'claim to be keeping his distance from *Radantisemitismus*' as merely rhetorical (ibid.:47).

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Nipperdey and Reinhard Rürup see Treitschke's anti-Semitism as a 'fundamental criticism of the principles and manifestations of modern liberal society' (Nipperdey/ Rürup 1972:136). Treitschke's anti-Semitism is both nationalist and anti-liberal and 'a symptom of the splitting off of radical and integral nationalism from the liberals' moderate nationalism' (ibid.:146).

<sup>33</sup> Jörn Hackeschmidt sees Treitschke's text as 'blowing up the floodgates' and as 'paradigmatic for the outbreak of a latent anti-Semitism' (Hackeschmidt 1997:81f).

<sup>34</sup> Sanford Ragins writes that Treitschke criticized the Jews not for racial or theological reasons, but for 'maintaining *national* traits that were alien to the German character' ((Ragins 1980:14f, italics in the original). While Jews 'should have equal rights in the *state*, he maintained that membership in the German *nation* was a different matter'. However, because Treitschke saw 'no room for double nationality' on 'German soil' (ibid.:16), the Jews had to fully assimilate into the German nation (their membership in the state notwithstanding) or else emigrate. Ragins asserts that 'Treitschke's assault was particularly serious' not so much because of his high prestige, but 'because it was an attack on the *emancipated* Jew mounted from *within* liberalism' (italics in the original). He 'was in truth the spokesman for a major tendency within German liberal Protestant circles' (ibid.:16f). For them, 'Christianity still had to be the foundation of the state by acting as a moral and educational force suffusing all areas of life with religious self-consciousness' (ibid.:17). Germany was to them a *Kultur*nation, based in Christian (i.e. Protestant) culture. Ragins emphasizes that also those liberals who were less or not at all interested in 'a strong Christian presence' confirmed the 'necessity for homogenization', quoting Mommsen as the most 'illustrious' example.

Junkerized sense of the time', his argument was 'relatively sober and intelligent' and not racist (Lindemann 1997:133).<sup>35</sup>

Lindemann's assessment recalls that by Franz Mehring (1882)<sup>36</sup> who wrote a fierce polemic against Stöcker's anti-Semitic party in which he contrasted Treitschke favourably to Stöcker:

It was a serious political obligation to bring into the open the hatred that was smoldering under the ashes, before its invisible ravages had affected the noblest parts of our national organism. To have done this, and in the only dignified manner possible, namely with manly frankness and scientific seriousness, is the great and unforgettable contribution of Treitschke. This patriotic deed not only meet objective opposition, often from equally honorable motives – I mention only Cohen's high-minded, serious rebuttal; it also had to suffer the most disgusting vilification. This was a wretched attempt at intellectual terrorism (*Gesinnungsterror*) all the more contemptible since it tried to sail under a 'liberal' flag and usually originated with people who for their part made the most extensive, not to say intemperate, use of the right of free speech (quoted from the translation in Massing 1949:313-6).

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<sup>35</sup> Albert S. Lindemann writes that most of what Treitschke brought up in 1879-1880 'had already been widely discussed by liberal intellectuals in the 1860s'. Treitschke merely reformulated the common liberal concerns that many Jews 'seemed unwilling to sacrifice enough of their sense of separateness' in order to blend into the German nation (Lindemann 1997:132) 'in a more forceful language – and in a much more emotion-filled context'. Treitschke was like most liberals 'torn between the demands of personal liberty and those of state power'. As 'a later generation of Zionists' would confirm, Jews 'did indeed have significantly different cultural traditions from the rest of the population' (ibid.:136), which makes the Jewish question for Lindemann a 'real problem'. Lindemann writes that 'conceivably, if men of the caliber of Treitschke, Cohen, and Mehring had set the tone of the debate in the ensuing generation, some happier resolution or at least diminution of the tensions between Jews and non-Jews in Germany at this time might have emerged' (ibid.). Lindemann does not agree that Treitschke 'set the tone' of the anti-Semitic discourse. Although Treitschke's 'concern about retaining the purity of the German spirit and protecting German unity' (ibid.:137) contradict his professions of toleration, Lindemann finds valid Treitschke's claim that the fact that the German nation is 'a young nation' that has been 'defenseless against alien manners for so long' explains and partly legitimizes the anti-Semitic agitation (ibid.:137). Lindemann asserts that 'German Jews themselves, in seeking to limit the influx of *Ostjuden* in Germany, had often made points similar to those of Treitschke, especially that Jews from Eastern Europe were too much attached to the idea of Jewish nationhood to be absorbed into German national feeling' (ibid.:138). He adds that some 'prominent Jewish observers' judged 'even harsher' than Treitschke or Marr the tendency of wealthy Berlin Jews to show off their newly acquired riches.

Lindemann's presentation is directed by his desire to make the point strongly that the anti-Semites of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were not 'proto-Nazis' and that anti-Semitism was not a *quasi* inherent trait of a specific 'German culture' (as e.g. Rose [1992] argues). Similar to writers from the Marxist tradition (Massing, Horkheimer, Adorno, Claussen), Lindemann presents anti-Semitism as part of the normality of liberal society. Due to the absence, though, of a clear *critique* of liberal society (that would have to include that of anti-Semitism) some of Lindemann's formulations could be misconstrued as apologetic of anti-Semitism.

<sup>36</sup> Having been a Lassalleian, Mehring did not join the Social Democratic Party in 1875 because of its predominantly Marxist orientation and kept aloof from it until the mid-1880s (Massing 1949:185f). After this date he became one of the party's most influential intellectuals.

The thrust of Mehrings article is to oppose Treitschke's *reasonable* treatment of the issue to Stöcker's *unreasonable* and irresponsible way:

For it is evidently one thing to analyze the Jewish question as a contemporary phenomenon under scientific, historical, psychological, social aspects; and another to make it the substance of political party strategy, of political mass agitation, carrying it as an immediate issue into groups who can react to it only emotionally and not with reason. ... For the danger of 'unleashing the beast' is nowhere greater than here. The Jewish question brings into play the three most potent sources of hatred known in history: a religious, a racial, and a class conflict (ibid.).

In a similar vein, the National-Liberal Gustav Freytag contrasted in his famous text 'On anti-Semitism, a Pentecostal contemplation' (1910 [1893]) 'the patriotic complaint of a well-meaning man of sincere intentions' to the concerns of 'angry and discontent agitators' (Freytag 1910:12).<sup>37</sup> Niewyk (1990)<sup>38</sup> argued that Treitschke merely aimed at accelerating 'amalgamation', and that also the liberal 'notables' in their anti-antisemitic declaration most of all complained that anti-Semitic demagoguery slowed down the process of assimilation.<sup>39</sup>

Bab (1988)<sup>40</sup> argued that Treitschke broke from the liberal tradition, but still stood 'unconditionally' behind legal emancipation. Wolff (1984)<sup>41</sup> saw

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<sup>37</sup> Freytag does not name Treitschke as this 'well-meaning man' but the allusion is quite clear from the context.

<sup>38</sup> Donald L. Niewyk argues for a clear cut distinction between 'the most common brand of antisemitism in the Second Reich' (Niewyk 1990:338) and Nazi-style racism. He asserts that the position held in common by Treitschke, Stöcker, Wagner and de Lagarde was 'more a demand to accelerate the pace of amalgamation than a threat of reprisal'. He underlines that anti-Semites in 1879 and the defenders of Jewish emancipation had more in common than the former have with later Nazi-style anti-Semites.

<sup>39</sup> The 'Declaration of the notables' is printed in Pulzer (1988: 326f).

<sup>40</sup> In Julius Bab's book, 'Life and death of German Jewry' (written in 1939, but only published in 1988) Treitschke's text is seen as 'the first case of an intellectually eminent German breaking from the liberal tradition (der erste Bruch eines geistig hervorragenden Deutschen mit der liberalen Tradition)' and as 'much more important' than the anti-Semitic writings by, for example, Glagau and Marr (Bab 1988:71). Nevertheless, he emphasizes Treitschke's distance from National Socialism with the drastic remark that Treitschke would 'without doubt end up in the concentration camps of the Third Reich' (ibid.) – although his formulation, 'the Jews are our misfortune' sits on the front page heading of every copy of the Nazi publication, the 'Stürmer'. Bab asserts that Treitschke 'unconditionally' rejected the limitation of the constitutional rights of the Jews and 'was critical merely of the literary attitude of the Jews' and their 'lack of nationalism' (ibid.:72). Bab, who had been an influential left-liberal cultural and theater critic in Berlin in the years before and after WWI, adds that he was himself for many years a friend of Treitschke's daughter, who was 'an equally passionate patriot as her father' and even let pass a part of Treitschke's private library into his own 'Jewish hands'. He quotes this as evidence for the complete lack of an anti-Semitic spirit 'in today's meaning of the word' in Treitschke's household.

<sup>41</sup> Theodor Wolff in his book 'The Jews' (written in 1942/3 but only published in 1984) makes fun of Treitschke's affirmation that he did not want to see Jewish emancipation reversed. Wolff

Treitschke still within the humanistic tradition, which prevents him from attacking legal emancipation. Abraham (1992) finds Treitschke's argument both liberal and antisemitic, but 'less than intolerant' (Abraham 1992:95). Hoffmann sees Treitschke as a 'formerly liberal' (Hoffmann 1997:225). Lenk holds that Treitschke turned away from liberalism around 1866 (Lenk 1988:28) but finds race thinking is not dominant in his argument (ibid.:31).

Massing (1949) relates Treitschke's anti-Semitism to his vision of nationalism.<sup>42</sup> Holz (2001) argues that Treitschke's 'national anti-Semitism' is a specific 'post-liberal' world-view that is not strictly anti-liberal since it still argues in a historical, secular and national fashion – fundamental features of liberal reasoning.<sup>43</sup> In Holz's account, Treitschke's 'ambivalence' is presented in such a way that the ethnic-ontological undercurrent of his reasoning was held

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remarks sarcastically: 'Not even on Treitschke can one rely. ... Compared to today's standards, what half-heartedness, what hesitation, what inability to get away from Humboldt's humanistic spirit, from culture! A little thunder, a few lightnings, and Treitschke confesses to the acquired rights, to the fact of emancipation!' (Wolff 1984:119).

<sup>42</sup> Paul W. Massing writes: 'Treitschke's anti-Semitism was anchored in his nationalism, but this nationalism was still related to some of the traditional values of Western civilization. For him the national state was the most worthy object of an individual's devotion. As a consequence, Treitschke thought that Jews were dangerous because he felt that they remained aloof from the state and the Protestant monarchy. He believed that they were undermining the heroic idealism that had brought about the Reich. The frame of reference of his anti-Semitism was the conflict between the state and the individual, between unity and liberty, authoritarian decision and parliamentary compromise. It held out to Jews the possibility of complete national and social integration if they would side with the forces of national self-assertion' (Massing 1949:76).

<sup>43</sup> Klaus Holz provides a detailed analysis of the wording and semantic structure of Treitschke's first statement. Holz writes that Treitschke's is a founding text of a specific 'Weltanschauung (world view)' that he refers to as 'nationaler Antisemitismus' (ibid. *passim*). Within the broader category of 'national anti-Semitism', Holz characterizes Treitschke's position as 'post-liberal anti-Semitism' (ibid.:12). Holz locates Treitschke's anti-Semitism in the context of the campaigns against Catholics and socialists as well as the policy of Germanization in Alsace Lorraine and against the Polish minority (ibid.:169), all of which aimed to promote 'national unity' by creating 'interior enemies'. He argues that 'national anti-Semitism' meant the 'integration into a world-view' (zu einer Weltanschauung verdichtet werden) of all oppositions towards whatever was considered 'un-German'. Holz argues that Treitschke's (modern, national) anti-Semitic 'world-view' is both, 'anti-liberal' and 'post-liberal' insofar as it 'inherited some essential characteristics of the liberal world-view' (ibid.:171): it is 'historical, national and secular'. Treitschke's 'attractivity' (ibid.:172) was that he was 'not a conservative or clerical' but 'a formerly liberal' thinker who challenged the liberals' 'predominant emancipatory self-perception ... from within'. Holz emphasizes that Treitschke's 'respectable (salonfähiger) anti-Semitism' and Stöcker's 'anti-Semitism of the street (Radauantisemitismus)' shared much of their 'semantic structure' (Sinngesamt) (ibid.:173). What prevented Treitschke from calling for taking back legal emancipation was the fact that it would have destabilized the *Reich*, and this would have conflicted with the functional place of anti-Semitism within Treitschke's apologetics of the German *Reich*. Holz concludes that 'post-liberal anti-Semitism' takes up and stresses the older liberal demand for the Jews to assimilate, while it re-evaluates the other side of the older liberal position, legal emancipation, without challenging it directly. Holz further notes that there is also a notion of an 'ethnic-ontological' moment in Treitschke's position that differentiates 'the Jews' from 'the (Christian) Germans' and can not be overcome by assimilation. He argues that these two dimensions of Treitschke's text remain un-reconciled.

back by its national-statist framework: Treitschke could not allow himself to come to the conclusion that emancipation be revoked because this would have destabilized the national state and its constitution. Langer too sees Treitschke's anti-Semitism as functional to his nationalism.<sup>44</sup> Claussen sees as Treitschke's underlying aim the desire to homogenize (vereinheitlichen) 'antagonistic capitalist society' (Claussen 1987:132) with the strong national state as the goal. Treitschke wants the necessity of assimilation to be pronounced 'consciously as an imperative' while his liberal opponents 'from Harry Bresslau through Bamberger to Mommsen' assume 'assimilation and integration into the national state' to take place 'spontaneously (naturwuechsig)'. Claussen likens the two positions to 'the moderate and the brutal face of bourgeois society' (ibid.:134). The 'liberal arguments against Treitschke' are limited by the 'illusion of a perpetually moderate form of nationalism'.

Pulzer (1988) sees the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* as the manifestation of a cleavage between nationalism and liberalism that developed after 1866. Talmon (1965) sees Treitschke's anti-Semitism as the 'watershed' signifying the emergence of modern anti-Semitism as a definite ideological system in which Jew-hatred would have a crucial place.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ulrich Langer discusses the *Streit* as paradigmatic for the relationship between liberalism and anti-Semitism in Treitschke's thinking (Langer 1998:292). He emphasizes the (usually unacknowledged) fact that Treitschke's initial statement on the anti-Semitic movement was embedded in a discussion of domestic as well as international politics stressing the particular urgency of 'harmony between crown and people' (Langer 1998:303). Langer stresses as the decisive element of Treitschke's argument that he saw anti-Semitism as a necessary and inevitable moment of the process of strengthening national consciousness (ibid.:306). He concludes that although 'Treitschke's anti-Semitism lacked racist-Darwinist traits', it was 'no coincidence' that 'fanatical anti-Semitic nationalists like Naudh' applauded his contribution (ibid.:319). Langer concludes that the *Streit* was both, a 'deep caesura' in Treitschke's political biography and a 'turning point in the development of German liberalism' (ibid.:385) making the question of legal equality of the Jews a touchstone separating 'conservatives and far right wing National Liberals' on the one side, 'determined liberals with a mind for emancipation' on the other side. Langer concludes: 'Treitschke's personal responsibility lies on the one hand in pretending not to embrace the crude anti-Semitism of the anti-Semitic parties but on the other hand to stylize himself as the chosen interpreter of the national spirit (erwählten Auguren des Volksgeistes)'. Langer sees as Treitschke's ultimate motivation his 'deep fear that the Germans' national and religious identity was in danger' (ibid.:385).

<sup>45</sup> Jacob Leib Talmon asserts that 'Treitschke may be looked upon as a watershed between the traditional hatred of the Jews and modern theoretical anti-semitism' (Talmon 1965:142). According to Talmon, Jew-hatred is 'rather a peripheral and empirical matter' for the former while in the latter it becomes 'a central point in a definite ideological system'. 'Modern theoretical anti-semitism' questioned 'the fundamental assumptions of Christianity in respect of the unity of mankind, the brotherhood of men, each created in the image of God. The whole of the Judaeo-Christian tradition had to be thrown overboard'. Talmon suggests that this was 'only a short step' from Treitschke's intermediate position (ibid.:143).



That Treitschke made anti-Semitism 'respectable', seems to be the one thing everybody agrees on. Respectable *for whom*, is rarely clarified; the formulations differ considerably: for Langer (1998:385),<sup>46</sup> anti-Semitism became respectable for the bourgeoisie, for Boehlich (1965b:237) for the educated classes, for Meyer (1966:144) for academia. Stern (1977:512) alone argues that Treitschke made anti-Semitism part of *patriotism*. Nipperdey and Rürup state that Treitschke made the anti-Semitic movement 'respectable (gesellschaftsfähig)' in the sense of making it 'an issue for the general public (publizistischen) discussion' (Nipperdey; Rürup 1972:138). Pulzer points out that Treitschke was the most important academic to shed respectability on anti-Semitism since other authors like Rohling and Dühring 'were altogether too extreme and dotty' (Pulzer 1988:240).

Bab (1988:74) and Wolff (1984:117ff) made enthusiastic remarks on Mommsen,<sup>47</sup> and also Kampe sees him as the defender of enlightenment and tolerance (1987:47). Mosse held the view that Mommsen 'castigated' Treitschke for his nationalist views (1966:202), while Dorpalen wrote that he 'gently slapped his hand' (1957:244). Wehler finds that Theodor Mommsen 'campaign[ed] uncompromisingly against the "delusion" (Kompromisslos zog er gegen den "Wahn" zu Felde) ...' (Wehler 1995:928).

Pickus writes that Mommsen rearticulated the Enlightenment argument about Jewish 'character defects' that needed amelioration (1994:68). Berding holds that for Mommsen, the values of liberalism were still superior to nationalism (1988:115). Langer finds Mommsen's intervention 'a true masterpiece of liberally minded political publicizing' although 'even' Mommsen's liberalism had its limits (Langer 1998:320f).<sup>48</sup> Liebeschuetz found that Mommsen 'hates

<sup>46</sup> Langer (1998:306) states that Treitschke made the anti-Semitism '*of the street*', not anti-Semitism *sans phrase* 'salonfähig'.

<sup>47</sup> Bab quotes Mommsen's assertion that the German Jews are indeed Germans and concludes that 'these magnificent words that betrayed once more in Germany the ideas of a free mind of genuine historical awe are today [i.e. 1938] more than worth listening to (diese prachtvollen Worte, in denen die Anschauung eines freien Geistes von echter geschichtlicher Ehrfurcht sich noch einmal in Deutschland kundtat, sind heut mehr als je hörens Wert' (Bab 1988:74).

<sup>48</sup> Langer notes that Mommsen 'insisted with a courage (Zivilcourage) that was impressive – although this should have gone without saying for a liberal – that the Jews were Germans' (ibid.:321). Langer points, though, also to the 'ambivalence' that can be found 'even' in Mommsen's argument: 'like Treitschke', Mommsen appealed to the Jews to accelerate their assimilation. 'The limitations of even a determinedly progressive (aufgeklärt-kämpferischen) liberal of the nineteenth century become apparent here: he sees the continued existence of a particular minority that is bound together by religion and tradition (...) as a danger for the

the use of religion as an instrument of political restoration, while he advises the Jews to drop their separate existence' (1962:180).

The general tendency of the literature is, however, to stress the commonalities between Treitschke's and Mommsen's positions. Stern (1977) notes for example that 'even Mommsen' saw conversion as the fair price to be paid for emancipation. Meyer (1966) asserts that pluralism seemed a danger for Mommsen, and that also Cohen and Bresslau held views close to Treitschke's; he points to Bamberger who considered the 'Christian state' a 'lesser evil' than the socialist state – a view that Bamberger shared with Treitschke.<sup>49</sup>

Abraham (1992) points out that Mommsen was 'no more pluralist than Treitschke'. While both see nation based on unitary culture, Mommsen reproaches Treitschke merely for escalating social antagonism (1992:104).<sup>50</sup> Low (1979)<sup>51</sup> also asserts that Treitschke and Mommsen equally reject ethnical pluralism as the basis for the national state, but deploy different tactics towards

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existence of a society that is modeled on the ideal of the nation and the national state. He has not yet managed to progress towards (sich durchzuringen vermochte) the belief in the [possibility of] a peaceful coexistence of different religious and cultural milieus on an equal footing' (Langer 1998:322).

<sup>49</sup> Meyer notes that the 'Jewish reaction' to Mommsen was 'quite critical' because Mommsen like Treitschke 'could see only danger in cultural pluralism' (Meyer 1966:168). Meyer writes that Manuel Joël 'rushed into print with a hastily conceived open letter' that 'possessed little intrinsic merit' (ibid.:146) while Lazarus' speech displayed 'considerable ingenuity in showing the logical inconsistencies of any argument that would make the Jews a special case' (ibid.:147). Meyer underlines that Lazarus makes Judaism 'fit the pattern of the Christian denominations', while strongly arguing for cultural pluralism. Bresslau's statement, Meyer writes, 'is entirely devoid of any independent conception of a Jewish future' and 'sympathizes with Treitschke's desire that the Jews hasten the process of their own amalgamation into the German nation' (ibid.:149). Meyer states that Hermann Cohen's 'conception of German culture was much closer to Treitschke's own than was that of Lazarus or even Bresslau' since for Cohen, 'Kantian thought provided a common faith which could be shared by all Germans'. The Jews should maintain 'their own forms of religious worship' but strive for spiritual and physical unity with the German nation (ibid.:151). Meyer points out that Treitschke 'was well pleased with Cohen's position' while the Jewish press regarded it 'more as a betrayal than a defense'. Bamberger's pamphlet, however, was received favorably without exception within the Jewish press (ibid.:153f).

<sup>50</sup> Abraham emphasizes that 'Mommsen's statement is important because it shows the limits of German liberalism at the time on the question of so-called national minorities' (Abraham 1992:101). In Mommsen's use of the *Mischvolk* concept, 'ethnic pluralism seems to be a transitional phase in the development of modern nations. What separates Mommsen from Treitschke, is that Mommsen finds that Treitschke's 'demagoguery' escalates the antagonism of groups.

<sup>51</sup> Alfred D. Low writes that Treitschke and Mommsen engaged 'in ideological combat with each other' merely about 'tact and tactics'. He asserts that 'the nineteenth-century German demand ... for the assimilation and ultimate merger of the Jews with the Germans sprang also from the seemingly progressive, liberal, and national program for a strong, unitary, homogeneous nation. It aimed at the demise of all territorial, cultural, national, and religious peculiarities and differences' (Low 1979:411). Low argues that most Germans including many Jews 'held that any alien nationality on German soil had the duty to work towards its own cultural and national extinction' (ibid.:412).

promoting assimilation. Ragins (1980) stresses that Mommsen also saw the necessity for homogenization; Ragins sees Lazarus restating emancipation ideology.<sup>52</sup> Geismann argues that Mommsen as well as Cohen failed to defend liberal principles against Treitschke.<sup>53</sup> Hoffmann sees Mommsen's contributions as emblematic for the inability of liberals to oppose modern anti-Semitism for two reasons: firstly, liberals like Mommsen rejected 'cultural pluralism', and secondly, liberalism could not explain the 'dynamism of the anti-Semitic movement' because 'liberalism lacked a theory of its own crisis' (Hoffmann 1997:249).

Bacharach (1980)<sup>54</sup> writes that Lazarus harbored 'spiritual racism' and 'spiritual chauvinism' and points to the Herderian influence on him; he writes that Cohen went even further in the anti-liberal direction and demanded racial unity for the state. Langer (1998) however stresses in Lazarus the 'rejection of narrow minded nationalism'. He notes that Bresslau and Cohen are closer to Treitschke's position than Mommsen whose position is ambivalent.<sup>55</sup> Lindemann

<sup>52</sup> Ragins understands Lazarus' speech as 'an eloquent restatement of emancipation ideology and, in particular, of the Jewish understanding of German nationalism'. He 'reaffirmed Jewry's long-established self-perception of the compatibility of Jewish identity with full German identity' (Ragins 1980:30). Ragins notes that Lazarus' position 'was to underlie all subsequent justifications of Jewish self-defense'.

<sup>53</sup> Georg Geismann criticizes Mommsen's demand for 'toleration of Jewish particularity' (Mommsen 1965b:223) as inconsistent with the concept of liberal right: 'Wherever there is right, the talk of toleration is suspect and dangerous' (Geismann 1993:379). He argues that Cohen's failure to oppose Treitschke is 'incomprehensible and shocking' (ibid.:372). He states that the Kantian philosopher Cohen should have been expected to defend the liberal notion that the state is obliged to 'grant' civil rights to every citizen because human right included a claim to civil rights (ibid.:373). Geismann concludes that the *Streit* – given that nobody actually opposed Treitschke's relinquishing of any concept of universal right – marks the final stage of a long decline of the tradition of *jusnaturalism* (Geismann 1993:380).

<sup>54</sup> Walter Zwi Bacharach points out that Lazarus' demand that the Jews *should* cultivate 'a feeling of belonging to the German people' logically presupposes that 'belonging' is to a high degree subject to choice (Bacharach 1980:199). On the other hand, though, he raised an argument that 'did not differ much from "spiritual racism"' (ibid.; Bacharach translates Lazarus term 'Stamm' [tribe] as 'race') and displayed 'a form of spiritual chauvinism' of a Herderian kind (ibid.:200). Bacharach points out that Cohen in his response to Lazarus even went beyond the form of 'chauvinism' displayed by Lazarus; he 'yearned for national unity within which "racial unity" (*Raceneinheit*) would prevail' (ibid.). Cohen, as Bacharach underlines, stressed 'physical singularity' as part of a 'more sublime inner unity' promoting the development of 'the racial type'. Bacharach concludes: 'Naturally we must not attribute to Hermann Cohen racist trends of thought such as those spread by racial antisemitism. But we cannot ignore his use of this dangerous form of argument. The vagueness and the undefined quality of these phrases led to an ambivalent understanding of Cohen's words, and it is this very ambiguous, mystical quality which comprises the theory of national racism' (ibid.:200f).

<sup>55</sup> Langer sees Lazarus' speech as a strong and influential rejection of 'narrow-minded nationalism' (Langer 1998:308f). He presents Cassel's position as 'a plea for the restoration of occidental cosmopolitan Christianity against currently thriving cosmopolitan nihilism' adding that the latter's 'pre-Christmas' appeal did not have far-reaching effects (ibid.:312). Langer

(1997)<sup>56</sup> stresses that Mommsen, Cohen and Bamberger agreed with Treitschke's judgement of Graetz. Hamburger (1968:219) writes that the 'most militant (kämpferischste) refutation of Treitschke's pamphlet' was by *Paulus Cassel*.

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underlines that Bresslau agreed with Treitschke's ideas about the necessity of assimilation and merely criticized Treitschke's reference to anti-Semitism as counterproductive (ibid.:313f). Further, Langer mentions that Cohen 'subscribed to a similar metaphysics of the state' as Treitschke did (ibid.:316). Langer agrees with Bamberger's interpretation that Treitschke's turning nationality into a 'cult' (ibid.:317) was instrumental to his struggle against liberalism.

<sup>56</sup> Lindemann confirms Treitschke's (and others') assessment that 'the sense of Jewish superiority' expressed in the eleventh volume of Heinrich Graetz's 'History of the Jews' 'was at times narrow and excessive' (Lindemann 1997:140). Lindemann clearly overstates the point when he writes that 'compared with it, Treitschke's history of the Germans may be described as generous in spirit'. On Graetz's method he says: 'Graetz conceived Jewish history as the unfolding of an immanent idea and was inclined to minimize the notion of productive interplay between Jew and Gentile'.

## 1.3 The historical background

### 1.3.1 Liberalism

#### 1.3.1.1. The concept of 'liberalism'

Many discussions of the concept of 'liberalism' suggest a distinction be made between liberalism as a 'world-view'<sup>57</sup> or a tradition of thought, and liberalism as a political program, set of practices, a movement or even – most narrowly – as the name of a political party with specific values and goals.<sup>58</sup> Arblaster (1984:11 ff) suggests that only such positions ought to be called liberal in the full sense of the word that pursue specifically liberal goals and values – such as individual rights and freedoms, limited government, religious toleration, free-market economics – against the backdrop of the specifically liberal world-view, namely methodological individualism, secularism, confidence in the use of reason, confidence in progress. This definition acknowledges that goals that are

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<sup>57</sup> This means a notion of 'human nature', a theory of society, of history and especially of the relation between 'man', society and history.

<sup>58</sup> Extracting an encompassing definition of the concept of 'liberalism' from the existing literature is extremely difficult. Janik writes that liberalism is best understood as a relational element within a dynamic range of concepts (Janik 1996:66) from 'reactionary' through 'conservative' and 'liberal' to 'radical'. Whatever in any given moment in time may be the precise meaning of any of these concepts depends on how all of them are related to each other by discursive practice. Janik writes that 'liberalism' is a concept of the type of 'essentially contested concepts' that constitute a specific kind of discussion, and a range of disagreements that are considered as legitimate within the framework of that discussion (ibid.:67). In this sense, a definition of the concept can only be given by taking account of the different forms of *dissent* about what it means both, amongst adherents of liberalism and between the latter and their opponents. However, even such a very 'liberal' way of defining the concept needs some minimum degree of normative definition to start with.

George L. Mosse for example distinguishes 'Liberal thought' – in particular individualism and the concept of *Bildung* as an unending process – from 'Liberal politics' (Mosse 1987:XIV). Jarausch and Jones write that liberalism is not only 'an organized political movement' but also 'a set of cultural attitudes, social practices, and economic principles' (Jarausch/Jones 1990:13). Friedrich Meinecke reflected on the same phenomenon when he noted in 1927 that liberalism had by that time become a ferment of political and intellectual normality to such a degree that 'one either ignores or takes it for granted' (quoted in Vierhaus 1982:784). This reflects the fact that Liberalism as a political program, or even a political party, came into existence only after a significant portion of what could be called 'liberal society' had already been realized, such as the splitting of traditional social order into separate spheres – the economic, the political and 'the social' (the latter being that which is left from 'traditional society' after 'economy' and 'politics' have been established as separate spheres). While liberalism as a political program can only meaningfully exist within the context of bourgeois, liberal society, that society may have been brought about by people who were not 'bourgeois liberals'. Langewiesche (2000:xiii) notes for example that before the era of the founding of the German *Reich* the calls for 'economic liberalism', i.e. the freeing of 'the economy' from 'shackles of all kinds' did not typically come from people called 'Liberals'. This important aspect of the historical process has been obscured by the notion – itself a piece of liberal ideology – that a 'rising bourgeoisie' ended or transformed the *ancien régime* (with or without recourse to some event called 'bourgeois revolution').

typically pursued by liberals can also be pursued by people who have different (for example socialist or conservative) world-views, and also that liberal presuppositions (in terms of world-view) can lead to 'illiberal conclusions' (as in the case of Hobbes).

If one accepted this proposition, a large part of political thought and praxis in the context of modern society could be interpreted as if on a sliding scale that includes liberals who pursue illiberal politics, 'properly liberal' (ideal-typical) liberals and non-liberals who – in an almost ironic sense – contribute crucially to the materialization of the aims of liberal politics. One of the pivots of both, liberal thought and liberal political praxis, is the invocation of *progress* and *harmony*. All major divisions within the liberal tradition can be understood as differences about what exactly needs to be done, or needs to be avoided, to further progress and harmony. Within that proposition, a very large array of policies can be, and has been, accommodated.<sup>59</sup>

However, the existing scholarly literature is far from any generally accepted systematization but tends to address any or all of the above under the category 'liberal' without bothering too much with definitions.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Wallerstein plays on the twofold meaning of the term 'liberalism' with his suggestion to distinguish between 'lower case' and 'upper case' liberalism. He argues that, on the one hand, (lower case) liberalism is 'the global ideology' or 'the geoculture (...) of the modern world-system' (Wallerstein 1995:1), 'which is at heart nothing but modernity' (ibid.:90), on the other hand, a particular movement or party within this framework (upper case *Liberalism*). He stresses that all over Europe, since around 1848 Liberals and Conservatives came to a form of 'reconciliation' based on the recognition by Liberals of the centrality of protecting property and the Conservatives' recognition of the utility of liberal reform for Conservative purposes (ibid.:87). The more (lower case) *liberalism* succeeded in becoming 'the dominant ideology of the world-system', *Liberalism* disintegrated. Ironically, the success of (lower case) *liberalism* 'was in fact put into effect by the combined effort of conservatives and socialists'. 'Enlightened Conservatives' like Disraeli and Bismarck 'were willing to make the great leap that the Liberals never dared to make' (ibid.:101). For example, it was not typically Liberals who first broadened the suffrage – which, after the event, has nevertheless been interpreted as implicit in the liberal world-view. Much more than the extension of suffrage, the transformation of existing states into modern nation-states was a pivotal liberal issue that was also initially resented by Conservatives as well as Socialists. However, 'the "outlying" zones' (in a geographical as well as social sense) of what were to become national societies could only effectively be integrated into their respective nation-states by socialist and conservative movements in the last decades of the nineteenth century (ibid.:101).

<sup>60</sup> An 'ideal-typical' liberal writer, in Arblaster's sense, would be Charles de Montesquieu who suggested a set of pragmatic measures to ensure liberty (such as separation of powers, constitutional 'checks and balances') based on a discussion of human society (Janik 1996:70ff). Especially the fact that Montesquieu looked for ways to adopt the example of English political institutions by *adapting* them to the specific and different historical conditions (of France, in his case) rather than plainly *emulating* them makes Montesquieu paradigmatic for what much later would be called 'National Liberalism' (ibid.).



My discussion of the concept 'liberalism' starts from the question, who formed it and with what meaning, and proceeds to identify the concept's pre-history – i.e. the history of *the concept* before *the word* was first used in the period of the American and French revolutions – and to how it subsequently branched out into more differentiated concepts and uses.

Liberalism as an explicitly *political* programme is a product of the experience of the American and French revolutions. In this context and immediately after, the word referred to those who opposed the restoration of the *ancien régime* (Vierhaus 1982:743) and advocated careful reform 'in keeping with the times'. Before that, however, the word 'liberal' meant the attitude or views that would typically, or even naturally, be held by any benevolent, generous, reasonable, unprejudiced, educated, morally and emotionally balanced person – characteristics that would in the bourgeois age be thought of as those of an independent, sovereign bourgeois individual (ibid.:745).<sup>61</sup> The modern political concept 'liberal' preserved and exploited its pre-modern and pre-political meaning.<sup>62</sup>

In Germany, at least from the 1780s, the word 'liberal' was used as referring to a concept of 'liberty' conceived of in a vaguely natural-law sense as a natural human property. In this context, 'liberality' means as much as non-partisanship<sup>63</sup> and all the conclusions that one is assumed to arrive at if one is a truly non-partisan, i.e. liberal thinker. This was underpinned by the Enlightenment assumption that proper, un-distorted thinking cannot but lead to the recognition of (natural-law) truth.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> The Latin word 'liberalis' had the two meanings, 'to do with liberty' and 'generous; as is proper for a free born man'. 'Liberalitas' was noble, liberal-minded and generous attitude' (Vierhaus:1982:745), a characteristic of an individual that referred not to the political but to the public sphere. It was connected to prestige and public standing. Under Caesar, it became a political term denoting 'Caesarian' spending politics.

<sup>62</sup> Because liberal individuals were in reality propertied (until in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the extension and redefinition of citizenship changed this semantic field) the concept has always had a class-connotation which bourgeois liberals usually did not deny: they asserted, though, that pursuit of the particular interests of the bourgeoisie are for the benefit of the general good (ibid.:742).

<sup>63</sup> This notion is not unlike what liberal sociologists like Weber would a century later call 'objectivity' or 'value-freedom (Wertfreiheit)'.  
<sup>64</sup> In an essay attached to his translation of Burke's 'Reflections on the Revolution in France' from 1793, Friedrich Gentz advocated a 'continuous, liberal, non-partisan (partheylosen) multifaceted thinking about the nature and the fundamentals of bourgeois society (bürgerliche Verbindung)'. Friedrich Schiller referred in the same year (in his 'Letters on aesthetic education') to 'liberal thinking' as thinking that is free of limitations and prejudices and able to abstract from

The *political* programme of liberalism was formed in France during the years following 1795, i.e. the governments of the *Directoire* and Napoleon. It refers primarily to the politics of the *Gironde* and the upper bourgeoisie in their struggle – against royalist reaction on the one side, egalitarian popular movements on the other side – for ending the ‘revolutionary passions’ and securing what had been achieved (Vierhaus 1982:749).

Under the restoration in France the word ‘liberal’ was generally used with negative connotations. In 1819, however, the first copy of a journal, ‘Le Libéral’ was issued (Vierhaus 1982:751).<sup>65</sup>

The liberal historian Augustin Thierry, ‘refracting the historical perspective of his principal source, David Hume, through the experience and ideology of France after the Revolution’ (Comninel 1987:60), presented middle class ‘industry’ (i.e., industriousness) as the ‘progressive force of civilization’ that has been ‘hampered’ for a long time by ‘parasitic wealth and indolence; by tradition, privilege, and ignorance; by special interests and arbitrary injustice’ (ibid.:61).<sup>66</sup>

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one’s own position (Vierhaus 1982:747). Also in the same year, Schiller remarked in a letter that current events in France showed that humanity was not yet mature enough for ‘the liberal regime of reason’ because ‘bourgeois liberty’ is only appropriate when a higher degree of ‘human liberty’ is already achieved. In another letter, he described a ‘liberal government’ as one in which one (monarchical) will rules in such a way that ‘the individual citizen can persuade himself that he lives according to his own principles and preferences (der einzelne Bürger sich doch überreden kann, dass er nach seinem eigenen Sinne lebe und bloss seiner Neigung gehorche)’. It should be noted that for Schiller the point is that the individual can ‘persuade himself’, i.e. is not persuaded by somebody else. Schiller does not question *that* the monarchical will rules, the point is *how* it rules. Friedrich Schlegel reasserted the classic, Stoic conception of liberality in his famous ‘Athenaeumsfragment 441’ that emphasizes spontaneous immunity against narrow-mindedness or hate: ‘Liberal ist, wer von allen Seiten und nach allen Richtungen wie von selbst frei ist und in seiner ganzen Menschheit wirkt; wer alles, was handelt, ist und wird, nach dem Mass seiner Kraft heilig hält, und an allem Leben Anteil nimmt, ohne sich durch bechränkte Ansichten, zum Hass oder zur Geringschätzung desselben verführen zu lassen’. Friedrich Gentz contributed in 1795 the *Wissenssoziologie* of the concept: he wrote (echoing the ‘doux commerce’ topos common in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and formulated by Hume for example in his ‘Of Luxury’ [1752]) that in the big trading places, ‘together with that of business, the intellectual horizon is extended (erweitert sich mit dem Geschäft auch der Gesichtskreis)’, and more commercial interaction brings ‘more liberality into the appreciation of things and human relations’.

<sup>65</sup> At the same time the concept gained currency in England, apparently first as an import from Spain (in its Spanish word-form) where it had – under the Napoleonic influence – developed into a political party name that implied the affirmation of the ending of the *ancien régime*, defence of individual rights and liberties, and warning of the dangers of social equality. It was thus understood as being progressive and conservative at the same time. In England a journal called ‘The Liberal’ first appeared in 1822. For the first time in 1847 the Whig party was officially referred to as ‘the liberals’ (ibid.).

<sup>66</sup> Thierry described the English Revolution in the following terms: ‘One could say that the rallying cry of the two armies were, on one side, idleness and power, and on the other, industry and liberty: because the idlers, those who wanted no other occupation in life than pleasure without pains, of whichever caste, enlisted with the royalist troops, to defend interests conforming to their own; whereas those families from the caste of the former [Norman]

Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term ‘economic liberalism’ did not exist. While today, classical political economy is usually recognized as a constitutive element of liberalism, the former’s authors did not know the word ‘liberalism’, nor was their overall thinking identical to that of 19<sup>th</sup> (let alone 20<sup>th</sup>) century liberals. Nevertheless, as Walther (1982:787) argues, there are important enough links and commonalities between classical political economy, and the intellectual and (later) political movement that subsequently became known as liberalism, as there are between both and the Enlightenment. 19<sup>th</sup> century ‘liberals were in greater agreement on economics than on politics’: while their ideas about for example the most desirable form of state diverged widely, they all ‘believed that the civic rights of man included the liberation of his productive energies’ (Hamerow 1969:152). All liberals abhorred the vision of ‘lotus-eating indolence’ (ibid.:158), the enemy of ‘industriousness’. Freedom of movement – of capital as well as of labour – and freedom of enterprise is one common denominator of all forms of liberalism.<sup>67</sup>

The two concepts ‘free-trade’ and ‘liberalism’ seem to have converged explicitly not before the movement around the British ‘Anti-Corn-Law-League’ that was founded in 1838 by Manchester industrialists.<sup>68</sup> The doctrine underlying the mass pamphlet literature of this movement<sup>69</sup> made generous use of the word ‘liberty’. However, political liberals in Germany at the time tended to reject what they saw as ‘economism’: even if they embraced free trade policy, they tended not to see it as a generic recipe for any social and political problem as Manchester campaigners often did. Supporters of liberal political ideas and

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conquerors that had been won over to industry joined the party of the commons’ (quoted ibid.). The army of ‘industry and liberty’ was of course also known as the third estate or ‘*la nation*’ (Sieyès).

<sup>67</sup> The ‘Preussische Jahrbücher’ wrote in 1860 that only ‘some reactionary politicians of half juridical, half theological complexion’ could want to defend credit restrictions (Hamerow 1969:162).

<sup>68</sup> It existed until 1846 when the Corn Laws were abolished. By that time it had developed into a mass movement with associations all over the country (ibid.:798f).

<sup>69</sup> It was only later referred to as the ‘Manchester School’. It is probable that the concept was brought into the German discussion by Lassalle who first learned it from Marx (ibid.:806). Also the term ‘liberal economics’ was first used by Lassalle in 1864 as another word for free trade politics with a wider resonance. He wrote also about ‘the political and the economic bourgeois doctrine’. In the 1870s there are more references for this use of the term ‘liberal’. A systematic use of the concept of ‘liberalism as economic doctrine, party and epoch concept’ can be found in the Social Democratic press, for example in Bebel’s writings. Bamberger (1878) (in ‘Deutschland und der Sozialismus’) was the first writer in Germany who tried to use the term ‘Manchester liberalism’ in an affirmative, positive sense, without much success. The first textbook of economics that referred to ‘economic liberalism’ was published in 1895 (Walther 1982:810).

supporters of what in the 20<sup>th</sup> century would come to be called 'economic liberalism' were not necessarily the same persons, nor were they always co-operating.<sup>70</sup>

### 1.3.1.2 German Liberalism before 1848

In Germany the constitution of parliamentary parties was slower than in England or France, so that the concept of liberalism retained for a longer period both its Napoleonic and the older, 'pre-political' meanings. There was much talk – pro and contra – of liberal ideas, spirit, principles and politics, but not of 'liberals' or a liberal party. The differentiation into liberals and radicals, or liberals and democrats (soon to be followed by that between democrats and socialists), also hardly occurred before 1848.<sup>71</sup> In the restoration period, 'liberalism' turned into a *portmanteau* concept for everything the Metternich system found dangerous.<sup>72</sup> It tended to be equated with 'Jacobinism' to the effect that most of those who wanted to claim a moderate middle ground position did temporarily not anymore use the word 'liberalism' to this purpose.

The partial realization of liberal bourgeois society<sup>73</sup> made the pursuit of liberal politics a *possibility*, but it became a *necessity* only after the early liberal

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<sup>70</sup> It is only from a *post eventum*, theoretical perspective they can be recognised as historically and logically belonging together.

<sup>71</sup> The journal 'Allemannia' defined in 1816 a liberal government as one that provides and protects legally the freedoms of commerce, person and opinion, promotes and furthers economic wellbeing, and guarantees equality in jurisdiction and taxation, gains for the people independence and dignity through its foreign policy and creates an army that is based on honour and patriotism. Such a government would be 'a warranty for the development of the national character of the people' (Vierhaus 1982:755f). In the same year, the journal 'Neue Allemannia' published a longer article that discussed the concept 'liberal' in more detail. It argued that the neologism was not vain fashion but a relevant addition to the vocabulary because no other word captured exactly the same meaning. Interestingly, the author suggested that the English language was able to use 'gentlemanly' instead of liberal, but no equivalent existed in German. It aimed to refute allegations the new word was dangerous and rebellious arguing that it merely expressed all that the good, patriotic and noble-minded citizen, 'the independent and active member of the big political family', would wish. It admitted that 'liberal ideas' could be misused, but this was not reason enough to condemn these ideas that are 'innate to every good and honest mind' (ibid.:757).

<sup>72</sup> In a text from 1819, the conservative Adam Müller rejected both extreme legitimism and 'so called liberalism', which he identified as a standpoint preoccupied with immediate economic benefit (ibid.:758). Another conservative writer attacked the 'moneyed as well as scholarly arrogance (*Geldhochmut* and *Gelehrtenhochmut*)' of liberalism. Franz von Baader (in a text from 1825) saw liberalism as an atheistical and despotic agent of the disintegration of the European states.

<sup>73</sup> The concept 'bourgeois society' is slightly ambivalent as it denotes on the one hand, a more general category (the community of family fathers, owners of property, as opposed to 'the state',

optimism that 'progress' (i.e., liberal economics plus some state led reform exerted by expert bureaucrats) will sort out things automatically fell victim to (post-Napoleonic) reaction. The 'bureaucratic liberalism' of the reform period constituted a link between enlightened absolutism and constitutional liberalism, but it also first created the social conditions for the emergence of a middle class that could subsequently formulate 'constitutional liberalism' (ibid.:4).<sup>74</sup>

The groups that embraced liberal positions before and around 1848 included not only – and not even primarily – merchants, shopkeepers and industrialists but also artisans, peasants, students and trainees (Sheehan 1978:46). These were groups that were both dedicated to the existing order and hopeful for the developing changes, despite the uncertainties they would bring. At this time, liberals were typically people who vacillated between old and new. This positioning made them prone to policies that would embrace the promises of the new but safeguard them against its risks, especially against what came to be known as 'the social question': they advocated co-operatives, various forms of self-help and educational associations as well as state intervention and regulation. After 1848, these differences tended to become more clearly articulated in organizational differentiation; the more the optimistic belief that the (quasi automatic) extension of the middle classes and their social and political organisations would 'prevent revolution' eroded, the louder became the calls for the state to help.

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whatever the specific historical form and content of either may be), and on the other hand, the specific form that bourgeois society (in the generic sense) has in the *bourgeois period*, i.e. (much more specifically) the society of right-bearing, commodity-owning and -selling individuals facing the *modern* state. I usually mean *modern* bourgeois society when I write 'bourgeois society'; only when I want to emphasize the modern in distinction from other ('pre-modern') forms of bourgeois society, I use 'modern' or 'liberal' bourgeois society.

<sup>74</sup> In the first place, 'the programmatic drafts outlining the future society of citizens of the state were not produced by the middle classes of the towns' who were organized and thinking in a traditional *ständisch* way, 'nor by a [capitalist] "bourgeoisie" which did not yet exist in Germany, but by a non-*ständisch* intelligentsia' (ibid.:6) – the academically trained people that Hegel thought of as the 'universal class'. The Prussian bureaucratic liberals might have been staunch free traders but they did not see any point in creating public representation for a population that was rather traditional and generally less 'liberal' than the Prussian bureaucrats themselves were. However, equal suffrage was rarely on the liberal wish list. Liberals always held that representation should be organized in a way that prevented the 'rule of those without assets' (ibid.:12). Also gender equality was not usually part of the liberal agenda. Authority of the *paterfamilias* reasoned with reference to nature (ibid.:22). Within the family, there is no contract between equals. The patriarchal relationship within the family complements the 'social contract' that liberalism claims rules outside it.

Central to the beliefs of early liberalism was ‘the expectation that the middle classes would successively absorb all other classes of society and thus be able ‘automatically’ to provide mediation and synthesis for society as a whole. The emergence of the proletariat seemed – at that time – as a merely temporary phenomenon that could be either patronized and embraced, or else fought and defeated easily. Pro-emancipation liberals expected the workers to become de-proletarianized, well behaved and educated citizens in much the same way that they expected the Jews to become ‘de-Judaized’ German citizens (Langewiesche 2000:13).

Liberals in the Rhineland (a province of Prussia) where industry was most developed departed as early as the 1830s from the notion of the ‘classless society of citizens’ and argued that the leading role in society should be played by ‘reputable merchants and manufacturers’, that industry was the ‘true basis of the state’ and that ‘where industry is strong as a force, so too is political power and freedom’ (ibid.:20). This is the background against which the (subsequently hegemonic) combination of free-market policy and Prussianism, the notion that Prussia was the locomotive for the establishment of ‘English conditions’, originated.<sup>75</sup>

For this new perspective within the liberal movement, the quick creation of a national economic sphere was more important and more promising for liberty than the rather old-fashioned and legalistic ‘yearning for a constitution’

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<sup>75</sup> The ‘early-liberal’ idea of a harmonious society in which ‘citizens’ peacefully worked together for the ‘common good’ was transformed rather than abandoned in the process; it was modernized, as it were. The rapid development of capitalist industrialization obviously led to the adoption of political economy in some shape or form, and the variant that proved most popular in Germany was Bastiat’s theory of ‘economic harmony’. Oppenheim wrote in 1861 that Frédéric Bastiat in his ‘*Harmonies économiques*’ (originally 1850, German in the same year) had developed ‘like nobody before nor after him’ ‘the organism of labouring society’ ‘objectively’ ‘This is the science of the modern state’ (quoted in Seeber 1965:33). In particular Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch was known as a follower of Bastiat, but it seems Bastiat was generally in Germany more popular than in any other country at the time. Bastiat argued that ‘all legitimate interests are in harmony’ (ibid.:34) Because nature created the individual for living in society, the laws of society cannot be in contradiction with the (natural) laws that govern the individual (ibid.:35). The notion of separate or even antagonistic class interests should be rejected, while the notion of ‘self-help and education (Selbsthilfe und Bildung)’ should be central to social reform. Bastiat’s concept of ‘economic harmony’ is closely related to his rejection of classical political economy’s labour theory of value (Smith, Ricardo) since the concept of surplus value (and its appropriation) inevitably implies the concept of class antagonism. In a form of liberalism based on Bastiat’s theory, separate working class organization will appear as unnatural disturbance of a *presupposed* natural harmony (while liberalism based on classical political economy might be more prepared to aim to defuse separate class interests by recognizing them, and accept independent social and

(ibid.:21). The more the latter seemed to be going nowhere, the more the new dynamism, based on industrial and merchant bourgeoisie, and thus *national* liberalism gained hegemony. This change in the character of liberalism meant the decision to trust in the dynamics of capitalist development rather than in reformist state action.

Early liberalism conceived of the bourgeoisie as the focal point of a process in which the totality of society would become bourgeois and for which the constitutional state and the destruction of traditional social relations would be decisive instruments. However, instead of a 'classless society of *Buerger*' the liberal bourgeoisie built, and was faced with, bourgeois class society. Reality – most clearly the class antagonisms of 1848 – forced the liberal bourgeois to give up some rosy illusions about their own doings; the choice was between hoping for a classless, or for a bourgeois society.

### 1.3.1.3 1848 and the emergence of 'National Liberalism'

'1848', from the perspective of the future National Liberals (Dahlmann, Gervinus, Droysen, Haym, Sybel and others), 'was really about preventing a revolution and bringing into one their hopes for a Prussian-led and liberal unified Germany' (Berger 1997:28f). For this, the nation should 'sacrifice some of its domestic liberty' for receiving in return 'an increase in power and prestige abroad' as Haym wrote then (quoted ibid.:29). The crucial problem lay in squaring their ambitions for a liberal united Germany with the fact that Prussia was economically but not politically liberal.<sup>76</sup>

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political organisations of the working class as partners in the process of *creating* 'economic harmony' through negotiation and bargaining).

<sup>76</sup> On March 10, 1848, the *Bundestag* established a committee of seventeen 'generally trusted men', actually a representative selection of the notables of liberalism, in order to draft a new *Imperial Constitution* on the lines of moderate liberalism (Langewiesche 2000:28). They attempted to create a federal nation-state based on the consensus of the existing dynasties, with a commitment to basic rights but without reference to the democratic and popular movements. The liberals failed because the revolutionary movement was not at that point strong enough to frighten the dynasties into accepting the liberal option of constitutional monarchy. However, at the same time it became too strong for the liberals to maintain a claim of being the sole advocate of social change. As a result, the liberals had to sit down together with republicans and democrats – in the spring meetings of the national movement and in the *Frankfurter Vorparlament* – and had to accept some republican elements to be integrated into the 'Old Liberal' draft of the Imperial Constitution. The Liberals (led by Heinrich von Gagern) managed to maintain the

Before 1848, the liberals who subsequently formed National Liberalism – for example Dahlmann – ‘expected Prussia to be absorbed in Germany’, being ‘rejuvenated’ by the breath of liberal, ‘free German life’ and even being ‘dissolved into its various provinces which would become in their own right part

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rejection of ‘revolutionary law’ displacing ‘traditional law’ and abolishing the individual states and their dynasties (ibid.:32). Propagating ‘order and unity’ against ‘disorder and anarchy’ (Gagern, Welcker) the liberals managed to safeguard legal continuity (ibid.:33). However, the more victorious the liberals (assisted by moderate democrats) remained on the one front – defeating revolution – the less victorious they were on the second front: defeating reaction. When the defeated republicans around Hecker and Struve subsequently led a second, more determined revolutionary wave in April 1848 (fatally limited to a few regions), the liberal members of the *Bundesversammlung* supported the dynastic governments to deploy federal troops against them. Frightened by the Paris February revolution, and parallel events in Vienna, the liberals pointed to the benefits of constitutional monarchy as enjoyed in England and Belgium (ibid.:37).

As soon as the Paris February revolution was mirrored by a first popular assembly in Berlin in March, the bourgeoisie began organizing a militia (Dressen 1999:74). The unwillingness of the Berlin and Prussian bourgeoisie to side with the revolution saved the Prussian regime that was subsequently able to decide militarily the situation in the southern states where popular movements faced much weaker governments. A leaflet from end of May 1848 made the point succinctly: ‘The liberal militias/ Can quickly turn malicious (Denn aus der freien Bürgerwehr/ Wird leicht ein Freiheits-Würger-Bär)’ (ibid.:113). It is important to add that a situation (March-July 1848) that was characterized by weakness of the bourgeoisie and temporary collapse of the aristocracy was decided in favour of the status quo through contradictions on the side of the proletariat. While some workers defended their own ‘moral economy’ (to use Thompson’s [1991] expression), others had already begun to internalize the standards and values of the bourgeois-liberal order (they saw disciplined, productive labour as something to be proud of and considered the existence of a class of people who ‘give work’ to workers as a necessity) and preached moderation to themselves. The second, new class contradiction (the capital relation) that grew next to and transformed the older one (the class contradiction between the two surplus-appropriating classes) took not the form of a clear-cut antagonism – bourgeois vs. workers – but manifested itself also in contradictory behaviour *on the side of the workers* which gave the bourgeoisie the time necessary to recover its agency.

A counter-revolutionary publication from August 1848 declared that the revolution had been caused by ‘aliens, Jews and lousy literati’ (ibid.:128). The authors of this publication obviously intended to build the defeated lower bourgeois and workers a bridge home into the status quo: they were not to blame for their attempt at a revolution, after all.

It took liberals and moderate democrats until the end of March 1849 to complete a compromise constitution. When the Prussian King refused to accept the Imperial crown, the liberals withdrew from the process and refused to support the ensuing battles that tried to force the princes to accept the compromise that liberals and democrats had found in between themselves, the *Reichsverfassungskampagne* (Langewiesche 2000:46).

The war that followed the second proclamation of the republic in Baden by Lorenz Brentano in 1849 – after the Frankfurt National Assembly had capitulated before the German princes – is crucial for the understanding of German liberalism (Kohn 1960:137). The republic of Baden was supported by a majority of the population and fiercely defended against impossible odds. When the Prussian military finally won in a series of massacres, 80 000 democrats and left-liberals fled Baden and a similar number fled the Palatinate and Rhineland. Reading Engels’ account of the war (Engels 1982 [MEW7]) with its mixture of admiration for the heroic popular effort and scorn for a half-hearted bourgeois leadership that could not decide fighting reaction efficiently – with a view to the emerging democratic and proletarian challenge – gives an impressive sense of what was the historical background against which ‘National Liberalism’ emerged.

Kohn suggests that the German liberals ‘in their haste to establish national unity’ wasted the revolutionary momentum when they called for a National Assembly in Frankfurt/Main. Instead, they could have followed the alternative path of calling for assemblies in all German states, formulating demands for reform that would have reflected actual power relations in each specific context. This is what had happened in Switzerland after the rebellions in 1831 (ibid.:138).



of the united Germany' (Kohn 1960:139f). Droysen declared 'at the end of 1848, in the midst of the popular uprisings' (ibid.) that he saw in the Prussian army 'a great moral force'. Dahlmann declared in January 1849 (in the context of arguing for offering the Imperial crown to the Prussian king) that 'our urge for liberty ... does not primarily aspire to liberty; to a greater degree it lusts for power which has so far been denied to it' (ibid.:141).<sup>77</sup> A good expression of the liberals' unhappy consciousness is Gabriel Riesser's comment<sup>78</sup> that given 'the sorry choice between the despotism of the princes and the so-called democrats', 'the victory of a despotic, even bloody reaction might be the lesser evil; but I dread the rule of a people which could be happy to see that victory' (Langewiesche 2000:55).

The liberals of 1848/49 had expected 'the Immaculate Conception of German liberty from princely generosity (von freigebiger Fuerstenhand)' wrote Ludwig Bamberger in 1866 (Bamberger 1866:4)<sup>79</sup> against the dominant tendency of German liberalism. This 'dogma of *Alt-Gotha*', that liberty could be gained without revolution,<sup>80</sup> was subsequently developed into a scientific doctrine by 'the school of *Neu-Gotha*' (ibid.:5). The main thrust of this tendency (of which Treitschke is a main representative) is 'limitless contempt for the French Revolution as well as for France'. Bamberger agrees with Treitschke's claim that 'a nation comes into existence only in the state, i.e. the large state (Grossstaat)' (ibid.:7), but rejects 'Neu-Gothaer' unconditional support for the Prussian monarchy.

The liberal position according to which national unification had to precede the liberalization of domestic policy was a result of how the liberals experienced

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<sup>77</sup> Kohn argues that the discussion concerning Poland in July 1848 was 'one of the most important turning points' in which the sea-change became apparent. The province of Poznan had been given to Prussia in 1815 on the Congress of Vienna 'as an autonomous province, preserving its Polish character'. The older liberal position that a Polish nation state should be restored was only maintained by a minority in July 1848, while a majority appealed to 'the right of conquest by plough and sword' (ibid.:142f) and voted for annexation. This decision anticipated the other two territorial questions that would become decisive issues over the following decades, Schleswig and Alsace-Lorraine.

<sup>78</sup> Riesser had been the vice President of the *National Assembly*.

<sup>79</sup> Ludwig Bamberger, 'Über Rom und Paris nach Gotha, oder: die Wege des Herrn von Treitschke', Stuttgart 1866 (Ebner)

<sup>80</sup> On the congress at Gotha in June 1848 the majority of moderate liberals including Heinrich von Gagern, Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann and Karl Mathy decided to pursue the small-German, Prussian option for the unification process (cp. Langer 1998:214).

the events of 1848. Since any invocation of popular support would inevitably have resulted in power-sharing with democrats and republicans, liberals could only hope that an emerging imperial central power would defeat the cohort of the particularist German princely dynasties militarily. The only serious candidate for this job was Prussia, which made support for Prussian expansionism the only strategy to modernize and liberalize state and society in the German realm without giving in to what the liberals saw as mob rule. It seemed to them that the liberal cause could only be advanced in a unified effort *after* unification, while the liberal forces in each individual state would remain powerless against reaction and conservatism as long as any encouragement of popular radicalism was to be excluded. In order to sail with the wind of progress and *Zeitgeist*, one large sail was needed that would capture this wind, rather than many small ones that are difficult, if at all, to coordinate. Left wing liberals, and also many south German liberals, held against this view that the unified state – if founded on illiberal principles – would merely be an even greater enemy of liberty.

The shock the liberal bourgeoisie suffered from the insurrections of the emerging proletariat in 1848 made those who had been more determined liberals or democrats redefine their general strategy and aspirations. The way this rethinking affected all aspects of the liberal program is emblematically expressed in the famous remark by Richard Wagner from 1850:<sup>81</sup>

All our liberalism was a luxurious play of the mind<sup>82</sup>, and so we talked about<sup>83</sup> the liberty of the people without knowing that people, actually resenting any actual contact with the people. And so, our enthusiasm (Eifer) for the emancipation (Gleichberechtigung) of the Jews also came from a mere idea<sup>84</sup> rather than from real sympathy (Wagner 2000:144f).

This statement by Wagner (a former radical turning anti-Semite) illustrates a more general phenomenon: liberals were strongly affected by the experience of ‘actual contact with the people’ and that their ‘liberty’ might mean a challenge not only to aristocratic domination, but to the existence of the – at the time still precarious – bourgeois order. This experience shed doubt on the desirability of

<sup>81</sup> From his essay ‘Das Judentum in der Musik’.

<sup>82</sup> The 1850 version of the text reads ‘luxuriöses Geistenspiel’; in the revised 1869 version (that became much more influential than the original text) ‘luxurious’ is replaced by ‘not so far-sighted (nicht sehr hellsehendes)’. The passage is from the second paragraph of the original text.

<sup>83</sup> 1850: ‘disputierten’; 1869: ‘we enthused ourselves (wir ... uns ergingen)’

popular 'liberty' in general, and this affected the whole liberal 'ticket'. Every item on that 'ticket' had to be re-examined in the light of the changed societal constellation. The legal betterment of the Jews was no exception.<sup>85</sup>

The liberal view of democracy as a threat to 'bourgeois society' led liberals to accepting 'temporary' despotism and warfare: Treitschke, whose writing career begins in this context, demanded – a characteristic formulation of the National-Liberal position – 'a powerful, purely German<sup>86</sup> state, in which this particularist nonsense is forced to submit to a centralizing force' (quoted in Langewiesche 2000:59). This strategic demand was underpinned by the belief 'that when the genuinely national unity of our people has been achieved, any unnatural constitutional form could only be short-lived.' Compromise with Bismarck was 'not a capitulation of liberalism but the attempt to create a new basis for the representation of bourgeois interests' (Winkler 1978:10).<sup>87</sup> Its successes in the 1860s and 70s seemed so impressive that National Liberals failed to consider the possibility that Bismarck might one day chose other partners.<sup>88</sup>

The most influential analysis of the prospects for liberalism after 1848 was Ludwig August von Rochau's 'Principles of *Realpolitik*' published in 1853 'to widespread liberal acclaim' (Langewiesche 2000:61).<sup>89</sup> The general message could not get lost on the liberals: 'Only through the exercise of power is what is

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<sup>84</sup> 1850: 'blossen Gedankens'; 1869: 'a general idea (allgemeinen Gedankens)'

<sup>85</sup> It is important to distinguish two elements in Wagner's statement: 1) liberal-bourgeois disappointment about 'the people'; 2) Wagner's projecting this disappointment onto 'the Jews'. While the liberals had good reasons to be 'disappointed' by 'the people', there has not been anything in the *actual* contribution by Jews to 1848 that would justify Wagner's – and other disappointed liberal democrats – anger. In Wagner's case, the projection of anti-popular anger onto 'the Jews' seems to be a way of constructing a concept of 'the people' that the disappointed liberal can refer to affirmatively: blaming 'the Jews' exonerates 'the people' and restores 'the people' as a positive point of reference.

<sup>86</sup> This meant, a state without multi-national Austria.

<sup>87</sup> Bismarck himself said in 1849: 'Protective tariffs are a protection against the freedom of the people to buy where it seems most economical and convenient.' (Massing 1949:31) Marx, too, defended free trade against Friedrich List and his south German liberal followers (Szporluk 1988). Even around 1870 'all Germany was for free trade' (Massing 1949:31).

<sup>88</sup> Sybel in a text from 1847, Baumgarten in his 'Self-Criticism' from 1866 and Treitschke in a text from 1869 argued that the preservation of a monarchical veto against parliamentary suggestions was necessary to defend bourgeois interests against both clerical reaction and proletarian revolution (Winkler 1978:8f). National Liberalism was antifeudal, anticlerical and antisocialist (ibid.:12).

<sup>89</sup> Ludwig August von Rochau was as a student a participant in the storming of the Frankfurt *Hauptwache* in 1833, he became 1871 a member of the *Reichstag* (Dressen 1999:200f).

right appointed to rule.' Right without power was like 'castles in the air'.<sup>90</sup>

Rochau writes that liberals would have needed to use revolutionary violence but could not because it would have swept away rather than reformed monarchical rule. A strong state had to merge together with the 'national spirit' in order to create a Germany that could 'laugh in the face of any threat of war or revolution' (ibid.:62). Rochau suggested that rather than seeking compromises with democrats and republicans – as in 1848 – the liberals should trust in the 'spirit of the age' being on their side and constitutionalism being the 'opinion of the century'. In Breuilly's words: *Realpolitik* 'made sense only if one firmly believed in progress and that history was on one's side' (in the foreword [xi] to Langewiesche 2000).

Some liberals did not think that economic progress would *automatically* usher in a politically liberal policy but thought that reactionary Prussia needed actively to be defeated in order to help progress to materialize. The pro-Prussian liberals, however, believed that Prussia would become a liberalizing force despite itself: although Prussia followed its own egoistic interests (the extension of territory and power), it would inevitably and unintentionally turn into a blind tool of the common good of bourgeois society by creating the conditions for capitalist progress to unfold. Once the dynamic of progress was unleashed and irreversible, it would sweep away its reactionary midwife (the Prussian warrior state for which the *Weltgeist* would – after completed unification – not have any further use).<sup>91</sup> The famous text by Hermann Baumgarten from 1866, 'German Liberalism: A self-criticism' (first published in *Preussische Jahrbuecher* of which Treitschke was then the editor) merely reinforced and eloquently reformulated the general tendency of liberalism in Germany.<sup>92</sup> It was on this platform that in 1867 the National-Liberal party was founded.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> This must not be confused with 'might is right'. The Nietzschean perspective is altogether different because it claims that 'right' *originates* in material power relations (a sort of criticism of idealism), while Rochau says that *right minus might equals empty talk*. His claim is that idealism also needs guns.

<sup>91</sup> The double irony is that in the *very* long run this trajectory came true: Germany is now a hegemonic modern liberal power, but her journey included historical experiences of the most illiberal kind in dimensions that not even the most ruthlessly Machiavellian National-Liberal could have anticipated.

<sup>92</sup> Baumgarten wrote in 1870: 'Unity, power of the state, national independence are the highest of all political goods' (Kohn 1960:182). During the 1870s he developed second thoughts, and by 1882 he became a fierce critic of Treitschke's second volume of the 'German History' (ibid.:183). Similarly Theodor Mommsen turned from enthusiastic Bismarck supporter to sceptic:

When liberals and democrats realized they needed the accommodation with the ruling powers to defuse the 'social threat', those items on the liberal 'ticket' such as support for the Polish cause and for Jewish emancipation that could be dispensed with were either given up completely as in the Polish, or put on the back burner as in the Jewish case.<sup>94</sup>

#### 1.3.1.4. Liberalism and the renewed threat of revolution

After 1848, the threat of revolution was defeated but reaction ruled. In the following two decades society had – silently but effectively – changed to such an extent that anti-bourgeois reaction was defeated while proletarian revolution seemed the more threatening: two decades of socio-economic development (capitalist modernization in the absence of liberalisation of government and of the form of the state) had reversed the situation. Liberal society produced ever more evidently a new class of people who showed tendencies to become

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in 1885 he wrote in a letter 'I wish to be forgotten by this spineless nation as quickly as possible'. Kohn is full of scorn for the late misgivings of leading National-Liberals like Mommsen: 'Even in his last years ... he continued to live in the illusion, typical of a German National Liberal, that Germany's unification through Bismarck's Prussia could have established a free society. So he turned in the 1880s against the German nation which had followed his own precepts. He sat in judgement over the nation. He never sat in judgement over his own nationalism...'. At the time when it would have mattered, he had 'found that the Frankfurt Constitution was too democratic and not sufficiently centralized'. In 1865 he suggested that 'necessity and the nation both speak in the categorical imperative, and as the nation-state can heal every wound, it is also entitled to inflict every wound' (ibid.:184).

Most importantly, perhaps, Mommsen contributed to the authoritarian spirit of German society with his glorification of Julius Caesar in his 'Roman History', which was obvious for every reader to have contemporary overtones. After having met Napoléon III in 1863 Mommsen wrote in a letter that he envied the French for having 'such a *grand criminel*' and wished fate might 'throw one' to the Germans (ibid.:186). Kohn comments dryly: 'Fate was soon to be so unkind as to fulfill Mommsen's wish'.

<sup>93</sup> In 1859 the 'National Association' (*Nationalverein*) was founded as a 'one-point' coalition uniting liberals and democrats 'by avoiding a programme of domestic policy' (Langewiesche 2000:83). The 'Progress Party' (*Fortschrittspartei*) was formed in 1861 by left wing members of the older 'Liberal Party' and some moderate democrats. It gained considerable popularity by opposing the increase of military spending but lost much prestige when it gave in to Bismarck (who became Minister President in 1862) in the 'constitutional conflict' (1862-66). After the war against Austria (1866) the right wing split off and founded a 'National Party' that subsequently fed into the 'National Liberal Party' in the Reichstag of the Federation (Massing 1949:210).

<sup>94</sup> The strength of this conviction is most impressively illustrated by the fact that – as Hamburger writes – almost without exception Jewish deputies of all German states – even in countries that were predominantly anti-Prussian such as Bavaria, Württemberg and Hessen (Hessen had nine deputies in the first Reichstag in 1871, seven of whom National Liberals, three of whom Jewish including Ludwig Bamberger) – fought for the *kleindeutsche Reich* under Prussian leadership (Hamburger 1968:249). Gabriel Riesser said in 1849 (in the speech that was instrumental in convincing the National Assembly to vote for hereditary monarchy and against the secret and

dangerous to this form of society, and had to be appeased with concessions – degrees of participation in the distribution of surplus value – while at the same time the necessities inherent in the expanding accumulation of capital had to be met – an increasingly difficult balancing act. ‘Economic harmony’ could no longer simply be postulated, it had to be created, ‘never quite knowing how many concessions were too much, or how few were too little’ (Wallerstein 1995:97).<sup>95</sup>

The liberals expected that ‘economic harmony’ would *first of all* realize itself at the level of civil society, in the bargaining and contracting of legal subjects, but *not exclusively*: liberals, just like conservatives and socialists, understood well that the ‘invisible hand’ needed some degree of help from the *visible* hand. The point was that state intervention and social reform ought not to empower the wrong people.

In 1874 Mommsen said in a speech that Social Democracy was ‘the mean enemy of all noble human kind, the gospel of the necessary abolition of all civilization, the oligarchy of the mob’ (quoted in Kohn 1960:187).<sup>96</sup> Bamberger in his ‘Germany and Socialism’ (1878) argued against an appeasement of Social Democracy in any form because in his view, the German bourgeoisie was too

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equal ballot) that German unification was a priority from the achievement of which Jewish emancipation will follow by necessity (Hamburger 1968:182).

<sup>95</sup> Some liberals tended to accept the freedom of association also for the working class, and argued for better general education (financed through cutting other unproductive state expenditure) (Langewiesche 2000:107). They saw the right to strike as a contribution, not a threat to the ‘harmony of classes’. Likewise, liberal supporters of universal (male) suffrage had a self-conscious view of the workings of bourgeois society and argued that giving suffrage to the workers was not very dangerous because, as Schulze-Delitzsch argued for example, the ‘great social interests ... will automatically prevail’, and the man ‘who stands at the head of an important industrial establishment, the man who by his intelligence surpasses a great part of his fellow citizens, the proprietor of a large estate ... are powers in life which assert themselves of their own accord’ (Hamerow 1969:178). Schulze-Delitzsch understood well that the fundamental structure of bourgeois society, once established, would not be possible to abolish by electoral means. On the other hand, liberal opponents of universal male suffrage tended to argue that the masses were ‘not ripe yet’ and that a democratically empowered mob (stupid either by nature, or as a result of millennia of unnatural despotism) might derail the natural progress to the harmonious utopia of bourgeois society. In this vein, the moderate liberal Johannes Miquel complained that ‘universal suffrage forces us to wage a difficult struggle against the stupidity of the masses’ (quoted *ibid.*:165).

<sup>96</sup> Eugen Richter wrote in his ‘The *Fortschrittspartei* and Social Democracy’ (1878): ‘Let us always consider the Progress Party’s struggle with other parties to the right as a side issue, and remind our friends as well as other parties that our main task is to defeat our common enemy, Social Democracy’ (quoted in Seeber 1965:42). As early as 1877 there were liberals who called for stricter legislation against Social Democratic ‘Demagoguery’ (*ibid.*:43). It was generally feared that acknowledging Social Democracy would inevitably make it stronger.

weak to be able to assimilate Social Democratic workers.<sup>97</sup> Treitschke demanded after the attempt on the life of the *Kaiser* in May 1878 that the nation's parliamentary representatives ought to go about the 'extermination (Ausrottung) of Social Democracy' irrespective of the legal subtleties involved (Winkler 1978:18). When parliament subsequently discussed legislation that was meant to do exactly that, the liberal response was mixed. Only a small minority within liberalism warned against panicking about the 'red menace' and suggested prioritizing the defence of democratic and liberal rights. Anti-democratic and anti-liberal suggestions made in the anti-socialist demagoguery 'bounced back on the liberals like boomerangs' (Seeber 1965:46). Liberals themselves had significantly contributed to the panic atmosphere of 1878 that led to the massive electoral defeat of the liberal parties. Their own anti-socialist arguments had prepared the ground for the anti-liberal government strategy.<sup>98</sup> The liberals' consent to the *Sozialistengesetz* (in its toned down second version)<sup>99</sup> was 'not merely opportunistic' (Sell 1953:265). Tactical considerations were underpinned by the more fundamental position that 'the privilege of liberal freedom' should not be granted to those whom the liberals saw as the enemies of liberal freedom.<sup>100</sup>

If the demonization of Social Democracy was almost universal amongst liberals, the attitude towards state-led social reform was more mixed. In the

<sup>97</sup> Bamberger saw the *Social Democratic Party* as a mere product of universal franchise – which he disapproved of – and as an ally of reaction against bourgeois society. He applauded the massacre of the *Paris Commune* and praised the English working class for not making any demands that would challenge the existing social order.

<sup>98</sup> Seeber stresses that 'the principle of the *Rechtsstaat*' already had repeatedly been violated by the majority faction of both liberal parties in the contexts of the *Kulturkampf* as well as the regulations concerning the civil rights of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine (ibid.:47). When Lasker (and Richter and Hänel from the Progress Party) spoke out against the *Sozialistengesetz* they already represented only a minority (although a minority that still was able to get the majority to support their position – in the first instance). Only in 1886 did liberals vote against the law at a point when it had become obvious that it did not work against Social Democracy anyway, but did good service against liberalism.

<sup>99</sup> Only Treitschke and Rudolf Gneist voted for the first version of the *Sozialistengesetz* (Langewiesche 2000:209).

<sup>100</sup> The fate of liberalism in Germany was indeed 'tragic' as Sell (1953) famously formulated, but in a more literal sense than he intended to say. The liberals' *hybris* – the delusion that leads to the tragedy's unfolding – consisted in equating democracy and republicanism to proletarian mob rule and expecting that *bourgeois society* by necessity would, sooner rather than later, hand over the commanding posts to representatives of *the bourgeoisie* even in the absence of parliamentary government and universal franchise. They failed to comprehend the full logic of the form of

second half of the 1870s in Germany, 'reformism was the fashionable creed of the day' (Massing 1949:21). Reform organizations mushroomed with various suggestions how to solve 'the social question', a shorthand for both the destitute situation of the urban and rural poor and the threat of their disaffection with church and state that followed from the former. 'All this reform activity essentially aimed at restoring the confidence of the working man in the government and at making the position of the lower middle classes more secure' (ibid.). While the industrial workers tended to be unimpressed by being patronized by priests and professors, the middle classes – who had for the preceding half century supported liberalism against the conservative concept of 'the Christian state' – were looking towards state support in respect to both their own economic distress and the threat of a revolutionary working class challenging private property.

The group of academics nicknamed the *Kathedersozialisten* ('Socialists of the lectern')<sup>101</sup>, proponents of state-led social reform, belonged to all kinds of political persuasions but were united by a rejection of 'Manchester' liberalism.<sup>102</sup> The *Kathedersozialisten* had to fight on two fronts. On the one hand, they were opposed by Manchester liberals, most prominently Bamberger and Oppenheim who dismissed their teachings as 'purely class hate propaganda'. 'Less expectedly' (Sell 1953:259), they were also fiercely attacked by Treitschke.<sup>103</sup>

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society whose sole representatives they thought they were: it is in this sense that they were tragic heroes.

<sup>101</sup> The term had been coined sarcastically by Oppenheim.

<sup>102</sup> Their institutional base, the 'Verein für Sozialpolitik' was founded in 1873. It emphasized in its beginnings rural problems and tended to stress the role of Jews in rural small scale credit as a particular problem (Massing 1949:218). Massing holds however that the *Verein* was not straightforwardly anti-Semitic.

The German state-socialist reformist tradition was immensely productive and influential. Victor Aimé Huber first developed a state socialist conception (Sell 1953:256); Gustav Schmoller presented the history of the Prussian monarchy as that of a benevolent, socially mediating institution; Adolf Wagner developed from a Manchester liberal into a far right wing conservative (and anti-Semite, main co-operator of Stöcker) under the influence of the state-socialist ideas of Karl Rodbertus. Wagner was the editor of the journal 'State Socialist [Staatssozialist]' (Pulzer 1988:44). Lujo Brentano was a *Kathedersozialist* with a more comprehensively liberal background: having lived some time in England, he understood that workers would stop being hostile to liberal ideas if they were granted the freedom of coalition, and so he saw trade unionism as the key to social reform. The basic program of *Kathedersozialismus* consisted of three elements (Sell 1953:258f): economic freedom cannot be absolute; the economy must obey ethical as well as practical demands; the state must intervene to provide a degree of social justice.

<sup>103</sup> However, Treitschke had signed the invitation to the founding meeting of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* in 1872. For Treitschke's attitude on this issue see chapter 1.4.1. Lasker, who was



As the brief presentation of the development of liberalism in Germany should have demonstrated, *liberal anti-Manchesterism* is not a contradiction in terms. At any point in its history, liberalism could accommodate fundamental opposition to what was widely seen as 'English conditions'. This is of particular importance as a background to the discussion of the relation of liberalism to anti-Semitism. Although the more notorious cases (Richard Wagner, Bruno Bauer, Wilhelm Marr; see *chapter 1.3.6*) of liberals or radicals who turned into anti-Semites might first appear as isolated cases explicable on an individual level, they do represent one of the lines of development of liberal-democratic reflections on the processes of capitalist modernization in Germany. A good illustration of this is a comment that was published in the National-Liberal journal *Grenzboten* in 1879:

Manchester radicalism is as anti-national as ultra-montanist and socialist radicalisms are. Its delusion (Wahn) is the cosmopolitan free trader society, the atomistic cosmic fog (Weltnebel), that has some kind of a core preventing it from total disintegration (Zerfliessung) only in the power of English capital (quoted in Winkler 1978:19).

The anti-Liberalism of this (also notoriously anti-Semitic) journal has indeed roots within the liberal tradition.

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initially sympathetic to the project, was persuaded by Bamberger and Oppenheim not to participate in the meeting (Hamburger 1968:290).

In his response to Treitschke's attack on *Kathedersozialismus*, Schmoller quoted a formulation by Bamberger (made in 1868): 'The state asks the individual to give his blood because the state is in danger, and it should say another time round, go and starve for I do not know you? ... Folly, nonsense, contradiction!' (Sell 1953:261; Hamburger 1968:290). This formulation sums up succinctly the underlying logic: if the state wants to rely on the citizenry to let themselves be killed (in war, but also in the daily life of capitalist production) it has to give something in return – namely some relief from the social distress caused by the extraction of the surplus that is the basis of this state's existence. The fact that the leading proponent of *Kathedersozialismus* quotes a formulation from a former democrat turned Manchester liberal (and staunch enemy of *Kathedersozialismus*) indicates that the whole discourse, despite and through its antagonisms, constitutes *one* continent of ideas, not several: the continent of what Wallerstein calls 'lower case' *liberalism*. The differences that the different factions argue about are about how good the price should be for the citizens to give their surplus labour power, and, occasionally, also their lives.

Neumann (1942:90f) includes Friedrich List in the number of the *Kathedersozialisten*. Because of List's combining racialism, imperialism and state socialism, he calls him 'the first articulate National Socialist'. Adolf Wagner, the most influential of the *Kathedersozialisten* and co-founder of Stöcker's *Christlich Soziale Arbeiterpartei*, followed List's conception.

Marx and Engels had defined their position in an article from September 12, 1847 (*Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* No. 73). They argued that 'the rule of the bourgeoisie' is preferable to 'the present ... rule of bureaucracy' because it puts the proletariat in a better position to fight the bourgeoisie as a 'recognized party'. They referred to this article in 1865 when they refused to cooperate with the Lassalleans. They demanded that the Conservatives should be criticized at least as strongly as the Liberals which the Lassalleans failed to do (Massing 1949:251).

### 1.3.2 Nationalism and the modern nation

Just as the modern state (*l'Etat*) overcame the pre-modern estates (*les états*), the modern *nation* replaced the medieval *nationes* (Schenck 1965:702). The characteristic of the usage of the two terms in the *modern* context is their tendency to converge. This tendency is reflected in the concept of *national* sovereignty which combines two different, and arguably antagonistic, notions: the people (the totality of legally equal individuals) are the supreme legislative instance, while the national state is the supreme instance of authority above any other power (ibid.:708).

When dynasty<sup>104</sup> was not available anymore to articulate and illustrate the specific differences between particular states and societies, the gap was filled by the concept of the nation. The cultural-ethnic features of the nation flesh out the 'contract'<sup>105</sup> between egotistic individuals (to form a society based on universally identical bourgeois values) in a fashion that would make the particular state and society look unique – i.e. worthy of loyalty, potentially to die for – *despite* the universality of most of its features.<sup>106</sup> The ethnicity and culture of the nation are also crucial for the claim to nationhood being as well an invocation of the *unity* of the specific national society.

Although the modern nation-state is in any case an ethnic-cultural *and* political entity at the same time, one of the dominant themes of nationalist discourse, and also of discussions *about* nationalism, is the effort to establish a dichotomy between 'ethnic' (or cultural, racial, German, 'Eastern') and 'civic' (or political, patriotic, French, 'Western') nationalisms, and an implicit claim that there are nations that are 'based on' the one or the other. Both are connected

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<sup>104</sup> Of course, even dynasty was only to a limited extent able to express specificity, since the aristocracy of Europe was very much interconnected.

<sup>105</sup> Rousseau first detected, as Neumann puts it, the deficiency of social-contract theory's trust on self-interest to provide sufficient grounds to unify society into sustaining a (modern) state. He emphasized that additionally to being based on a mere 'contract' between egotistic individuals, the nation had to be 'a moral, collective body' (ibid.:87). 'The nation' refers thus to a new form of loyalty that became a decisive political force in the French Revolution (although, to a lesser degree, already earlier). It helped the bourgeoisie to impress 'its system of values on all of the people'.

<sup>106</sup> In an ironic sense, the extent to which a particular nation has embraced *universal* (bourgeois) values and modern institutional forms becomes in this process – particularly during inter-state conflict – in turn an element of this nation's cultural-ethnic *particularity*: after all, some nations

(within the liberal context in the widest possible sense of the word) with the notion that the 'civic' is normatively superior to the 'ethnic'. This specific discourse – the juxtaposition of the two alternative 'types' of nationalism – seems to go back to the border dispute following the German conquest of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871.<sup>107</sup>

On the German side, *David Friedrich Strauss* and *Theodor Mommsen* invoked language, culture, race and history when they argued that the Alsatians were German and that the Prussian military had only corrected the 'historical anomaly' of French tutelage that had resulted from French 17<sup>th</sup> century conquest (Finkielkraut 1988:31). The most notable respondent on the French side was *Ernest Renan* who had – until then – shared German historicism's concept of the nation, its scorn for Enlightenment anthropology as 'abstract', for contractarianism as 'pernicious' and who had agreed that it was a 'dangerous sophism' to assume that the individual was prior to the nation (ibid.).<sup>108</sup> The experience that – after French military defeat – representatives of the (ethnically German) Alsatians expressed their wish to remain French converted him to a more contractarian concept of the nation: the case of the Alsatians proved that ethnicity did not determine political will. Renan avoided the dispute about the 'real' ethnicity of the Alsatians but argued that ethnic-cultural-racial 'abstractions carry much less weight than the right of flesh and blood Alsatians to submit only to an authority enjoying their consent' (ibid.). Renan managed to claim *concreteness* for the republican concept of the nation and to tar the ethnic

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are more universal than others, and within the nationalist discourse it is a good cause to defend – and die for – one's higher degree of universality against less universal nations.

<sup>107</sup> Of course, civic nationalism was formulated in the context of the French Revolution in the consciousness that it constituted a conception that was more inclusive than any previous one. It was always closely intertwined with the discourse of 'popular sovereignty'. For example, in the debate on the future of Avignon in 1791 the 'wish of the inhabitants of the city of Avignon to become part of France was held to override international law, in this case the Pope's ownership of Avignon' (Hughes 1988:12). In this context it was argued that the will of 'the nation' is superior to all other ('legitimist', traditional, historical) rights. Brubaker adds that the principle of self-determination was 'invoked to justify the territorial gains of 1791-1793' as well as the acquisition of Alsace in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Brubaker 1992:7). The common element of all these discourses is the revolutionary consciousness that tradition can be undone and replaced by something new that is based in the willing and aspirations of people in the present (whatever that may mean in particular).

<sup>108</sup> Renan was a moderate republican, influenced by the historians Thierry and Michelet, and part of the intellectual establishment of the French *Third Republic* (Almog 1988:256). He saw his own book 'La vie de Jésus' (1863) as an extension and complement of the book 'Das Leben Jesu. Kritisch bearbeitet' (1835/6) by David Friedrich Strauss whom he admired until the Franco-Prussian war changed his attitude to the German intellectual world.

concept with the brush of being based on (typically German) *abstractions*. The same Renan who had been ‘the real scientific inspiration behind the Aryan myth in France’, author of the words that ‘the Semitic race, compared to the Indo-European race, represents a truly inferior version of human nature’ (ibid.:33) was converted by the circumstantial necessities of the patriotic cause to a textbook liberal.

Renan’s reaction to German triumphalism became emblematic for the subsequent canonization of a conception of the nation that implied a notion of ‘man’ as able to ‘lift himself out of his context, escape from his national heritage’ (ibid.:34). It counted as the progressive alternative to what the apologists of German military might, Mommsen and Strauss, seemed to presuppose: man as ‘a captive of history’.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Finkielkraut points out that the basic constellation of the dispute over Alsace repeated itself in the Dreyfus affair (ibid.:45f), when the anti-Dreyfussards argued – as it were – the ‘German’, ethnic way (some anti-anti-Dreyfussards actually found that anti-Semitism was an un-French, German attitude) while the defenders of Dreyfuss argued ‘patriotically’ like Renan. Also the *Berlin Anti-Semitism Dispute* of 1879/80 shows the same constellation, but in this instance – somewhat ironically – Mommsen played the role of Renan, while Treitschke excelled in his performance of what had been Mommsen’s part a decade earlier.

The specific difference between German and French nationalisms is particularly interesting, but often misrepresented. In France, ‘cultural nationhood has been conceived as an ingredient, not a competitor, of political nationhood’ (Brubaker 1992:10). In Germany, by contrast, this integration did not happen at an early stage because nationalism appeared in two separate and for a long period hostile forms: as that of the (Prussian) ‘reformers’ who thought of nation-building in strictly political terms, and that of the ‘romantics’, who tended to think in cultural, moral and aesthetic terms (ibid.). The difference between French and German nationalism is not a distinction between political on the one side, cultural/ethnic nationalism on the other side, but that between a comparatively *integrated* political-cultural/ethnic nationalism as it emerged in France, and that of a tension-ridden *dualism* between political and cultural/ethnic nationalisms characteristic of 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany. However, in both countries the ‘inner’ nation-building through state-led unified educational and communication institutions happened only from the 1870s onwards. ‘In practice, in the midst of war against other states as well as against internal rebellions, the successive governments of France fused the idea of nation as the body of the citizens with the idea of the nation as the French’ (Breuilly 1992:23). Gall asserts that the ‘reactive nationalisation’ in Spain, Italy and Germany followed ‘the same pattern as the nationalisation of France under the banner of the French Revolution’. The phenomenon can already be observed in the context of the French Revolution, and has subsequently been a ‘gateway for a gradual de-liberalization and de-democratization of the concept of the nation’ (Gall 1996:212). If the articulations of nationalist thought in the context of the French Revolution emphasized universal and political values as defining the nation, it does not mean that other (‘objective’, cultural, ‘ethnic’) features were not (at least silently) presupposed as existing. The latter had to move more into the focus of revolutionary, nationalist discourse when the nation found itself in conflict with other states, and especially after these subsequently also adopted the concept of the nation and its characteristics. Only as long as the conflict was between ‘la nation’ and other states most of which were dynastic, not national states, the ‘universal’, ‘political’, ‘subjective’ ‘civic’ or ‘constitutional’ side of nationalism could dominate its articulations. The more, however, a situation emerged in which different states *of the same kind*, namely nation states, confronted each other, the less this was sufficient ground for mobilization.

As is universally acknowledged, in France and England ‘the state’ preceded and created ‘the nation’. In Germany, the state also preceded and created the nation, but in the German case this

However, Renan's conception oversimplified the issue as Etienne Balibar argued in a comment on Finkelkraut. Racist nationalism does not straightforwardly lock human beings into their *being-so*. Rather, it does accommodate (no less than liberalism and socialism do) a vision of transcendence (Balibar 1991a:57): racism and nationalism defend the transcendence of the state of 'animality' that humanity has already achieved against elements that threaten it with a regression into animality (both from within the particular people that the racist-nationalist is concerned about, and from without).<sup>110</sup>

If looked at more closely, the dichotomy of 'ethnic' versus 'civic' nationalism is less useful than it appears to be at first sight. If 'ethnicity' is narrowly defined as a reference to 'descent', hardly any nationalism will fit into that category because hardly any nationalism actually makes 'descent' the main issue. If 'ethnicity' is defined as a reference to 'culture',<sup>111</sup> then all nationalisms are 'ethnic'.<sup>112</sup> The salient point is that in reality all nations have a national culture, and most theories of the nation, as well as most nationalisms acknowledge this fact – whether they might otherwise be filed under 'political' or 'ethnic' approaches (Brubaker 1999:61).<sup>113</sup> The 'ethnic' and the 'civic'

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seems to be less universally acknowledged because a strong tendency amongst intellectuals of the time chose to believe, and made others believe, that 'the nation' created 'the state', and the administrators of the latter occasionally found it opportune to confirm this notion. When nationalist intellectuals claim that there 'is' a nation on behalf of which they speak and which is somehow prevented from 'having' its own state, they really mean that a state – if there was one – would find in a specific territory favourable conditions for *building* a nation out of two main ingredients, the 'ethnic'-cultural (but not yet national) raw-material and the historical experience of the founding of this state (usually including wars, often civil wars that might include intensified forms of class struggle or other social conflicts). The notion that 'common heritage' (i.e. culture or ethnicity) is at least one of the 'factors' or 'elements' that constitute a nation is based on circular reasoning: unless a concept of commonality or community is already presupposed, a concept of 'common heritage' is impossible. Of course, there have to be cultural traditions or artefacts that can be interpreted as 'common heritage', but they are never in and out of themselves 'common'. Commonality comes only from their being *recognized* and promoted as being common. The crucial point is: *how* and *why* are *which* cultural traditions or artefacts considered *by whom* to be constitutive of *which* commonality?

<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, many forms of racism and nationalism invoke a human ideal that they hope to realize in the future, although they might draw inspiration for this from the (imaginary) past.

<sup>111</sup> This is how Smith (1983) uses these terms.

<sup>112</sup> After all, *natio* is just Latin for the Greek word *ethnos*.

<sup>113</sup> Renan's famous lecture that contains the formulation that the nation is a 'daily plebiscite' (prefaced by Renan with 'pardon the metaphor') also stresses (in many more words) 'possession in common of a rich legacy of memories' and 'a long past of endeavours, sacrifice and devotion' (quoted in Brubaker 1999:61). The point of Renan's lecture was that 'the nation is "given" as

aspects of the nationalist discourse cannot be understood as the opposite endings of a scale of 'types' of nationalisms defined by the 'proportion' in which these two supposedly distinct ingredients are mixed.<sup>114</sup>

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well as "chosen" in the sense that one is supposed 'to choose' from amongst what is 'given'. (Cp. also Yack 1996:198;208)

When in the French Revolution Abbé Grégoire reported on 'the necessity and means of abolishing the patois and universalizing the use of the French language', he was addressing – in the name of civic equality – a crucial aspect of culture.

<sup>114</sup> For example Anthony Smith (1986) proposed such an approach. Furthermore, scales and classifications do not work if they presuppose that one can define one case of nationalism as more or less 'ethnic' than another: how can ethnicity be quantified?

### 1.3.3. The German *Reich* of 1871

The German *Reich* of 1871 was a nation-state but not founded by nationalists, nor inspired by a broad nationalist movement. It was a bourgeois state but not governed by representatives of the bourgeoisie. During its first decade at least, it realised a consistent program of liberal-capitalist economic reforms most of which were formulated by liberal experts and politicians but implemented by an authoritarian state apparatus whose backbone consisted of an army and a bureaucracy that were predominantly staffed by the sons of the landed nobility.<sup>115</sup>

The founding of the *Reich* under Bismarck was not primarily inspired by nationalism, although many nationalists might have claimed this (Brubaker 1992:12). The National-Liberal Rochau stated as late as 1869 that a strong national consciousness did not exist in Germany, and that therefore a national state could only be created through strong external force, not through an internal development leading towards political agreements (Wehler 1995:940). This is exactly what – surprising for all involved – happened in 1870/71. A form of nationalism tailored to fit the *Reich* still had to emerge and grip the masses.<sup>116</sup> The *kleindeutsche* unification of 1871 ‘was a radical departure from earlier trends in German history’ (Hughes 1988:131) and ‘was carried out to solve Prussia’s internal political difficulties not the German problem’.<sup>117</sup> Unification

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<sup>115</sup> To what extent these features are ‘peculiarities’ of the German case, or can also be found in other national contexts, cannot be discussed here (cp. Plessner 1974; Faulenbach 1980; Ruggiero 1981; Eley 1983; 1984; 1986a; 1986b; 1996a; 1996b; Blackbourn 1984; Breuilly 1994; Berger 1997; Evans 1997).

<sup>116</sup> ‘German patriotism was marginal in the Napoleonic period. ... For modern patriotism, in which state and nation are connected by ideas of culture and constitutionality, one has to turn to France and England at this time’ (ibid.). As Hughes argues, the idea that nationalism *caused*, or at least was one of the causes behind the unification of Germany (Hughes 1988:2) is a myth: ‘...at least until the last quarter of the [19<sup>th</sup>] century, nationalism was a minority movement, deeply divided and with only a marginal impact on German political life’ (ibid.). Breuilly suggests that the emergence of German patriotism was prevented earlier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by ‘loyalties to confession, region, narrow self-interest, and traditional rulers’. (Breuilly 1992:8). At the time of the foundation of the *Reich*, not even the middle classes were completely supportive of German nationalism: still in the 1870s it occurred that Bavarian deputies in the *Reichstag* would refer to Bavaria as their ‘nation’; only in the 1890s, was the concept of Germany as ‘the nation’ completely hegemonic (Wehler 1995:952). Strangely, the German *Reich* also lacked a national anthem and a national flag (ibid.:957). Furthermore, the concept of the *Reich* implied not so much national unity (*Volksgemeinschaft*) but that of a federation of peoples (*Völkergemeinschaft*) (Buschmann 2001:357).

<sup>117</sup> However, the domestic problems of Prussia were not solved but merely ‘transferred into the *Reich*’. Hughes suggests that a continuation of the development of the Confederation would have

was a 'damage-limitation exercise' (ibid.:135) aimed at containing modernizing trends and safeguarding the existence of traditional structures. Universal male franchise was introduced with a comparably Janus-faced intention. Having studied the case of Napoleonic France, Bismarck understood that it 'could benefit the conservative interest in the countryside; the rural vote mobilised by landowners could, in the absence of a secret ballot, swamp urban liberals whose mistrust of the masses robbed them of a long-term political future' (Carr 1992:101). The 'supposed national unification' led – 'ironically' – first of all to a 'serious polarization of the [alleged] nation' (Hughes 1988:3).

Through the war of 1866, Prussia created a solid power base 'down to the river Main' for the project of a Great Prussian state (Carr 1992:84f). The actual foundation of the Imperial German state took place in a situation where 'anti-Prussianism was growing stronger, not weaker' (ibid.:94). Carr suggests that 'National Liberal reactions to deadlock over final unification combined with serious political unrest in south Germany ... may well have played a part in the decision to go to war in 1870' (ibid.:96). The governments of Wuerttemberg, Baden and Bavaria were under much more serious pressure around 1869 than Prussia had been earlier in the 1860s. Popular Catholic movements, represented by parties that held a majority in the diet (Bavaria) or were part of a majority coalition (Wuerttemberg) opposed increased military spending, military service and the curtailment of church activities, and defended a *grossdeutsche* perspective against the prospect of Prussian hegemony (ibid.:94f). From their perspective, the *Reich* of 1871 was the 'product of a civil war' and meant division, not unification (ibid.:92). The *Reichsgruendung* made possible the stabilization of the situation in the south and domestication of Prussian liberalism while retaining political leadership in the hands of the Prussian establishment.<sup>118</sup>

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resulted in 'a giant Switzerland at the heart of Europe', which would have benefited and secured Germany's international position more than the *Reich* did.

<sup>118</sup> The divisions that Bismarck intended to send to Bavaria and Württemberg in case of an uprising were already earmarked in March 1870. In reaction to the situation in the south, the National Liberals in Prussia urged Bismarck to speed up the creation of *Kleindeutschland* by allowing Baden to join the North German Federation, with the afterthought that this might have provoked a French declaration of war which in turn would have increased German-patriotic, pro-Prussian popular sentiment. Bismarck, however, decided on an alternative route to the same outcome that made the war look like a Prussian reaction to French arrogance, not a French reaction to Prussian expansionism (making it more difficult for the other powers to support France) (ibid.:102).



The Prussian bourgeoisie had several economic reasons for making national unification a priority. One was that as long as the antagonism between Prussia and Austria remained unresolved, it had to carry the main financial burden for Prussian 'protection' of the smaller German states from possible Austrian expansionism. The Prussian bourgeoisie saw itself as 'structurally discriminated against' by this situation (Winkler 1978:8). Similarly, the multiplicity of state structures meant unnecessary deductions from the revenue: a 'most irrational system of taxation' (the tolls raised on the river Elbe) allowed for example a minor prince to build 'in Schwerin a palace which surpasses Windsor and Versailles' as the author of an article in the 'Preussische Jahrbuecher' complained in 1859 (quoted in Hamerow 1969:163). In the liberal 'German Quarterly' from 1862 it was pointed out that investments in modern factories fail to be made because 'in view of our national weakness a war threatens us at any moment' (ibid.:144). Furthermore, it was argued that a nation without a navy is disadvantaged in international trade because 'no fleet collects for German industrialists the unpaid claims they may happen to have in Mexico' (ibid.).

German nation-building needed not only regime change, but territorial changes that a majority of liberals came to think could not be achieved other than by military means. This placed at the centre of the political scene an institution that was by definition unlikely to promote a liberal mindset. In this constellation, liberals were allowed to run the economy and be 'arbiters of what constituted good taste' (Breuilly 1994:289) but political-military power remained in the hands of the experts. The alternative approach that had hoped liberal regime change in the German states could be achieved by parallel liberal-democratic movements within these states died out only in the course of the 1860s.<sup>119</sup> The difficulty was that the co-operation between reactionary governments of a long-established network of sovereign states would almost inevitably be more efficient than that between rather vulnerable grassroot movements – at least as long as the latter were not based on, and refused to invoke, popular mass support.

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<sup>119</sup> Georg Gottfried Gervinus' 'Memorandum on peace' (1871) is an example of a minority view within liberalism that did not welcome German unification in the form of the *Reich* (Kohn 1961 [1946]:109f). Gervinus argued that centralisation should be avoided and federalism strengthened – with not Berlin but 'a city which would symbolise a policy of peaceful civilisation' being the capital: an anticipation of Weimar and Bonn, as it were – in order to prevent a vicious circle of militarization of European politics. Gervinus held that Germany was by nature (geography etc.) a strong state that did not need to keep open military options.

The founding of the *Reich* – i.e. the fixing of its borders and institutions – was followed by what in German is called ‘innere Staatsbildung’ (Hardtwig 1993:12): creating the conditions for a deeper penetration of the state into society, of centre into periphery, of state and society into the relations between individuals and the individuals themselves, destructing the relative autonomy of intermediary institutions. For this process a new and more effective legitimization was needed that would also trigger an atmosphere of dynamism, mobilization and enthusiasm for a cause shared by all who found themselves inside the borders of the new state – the nation (Wehler 1995:942).<sup>120</sup> This became more difficult when during the industrial depression since 1873 and the agricultural crisis since 1876, the ‘nationalist fever’ caused by the wars of 1866 and 1870/71 gave way to the more sober mood of having to deal with pressing everyday problems (ibid.:946). After all, ‘Reichsnationalismus’ was primarily based on (apart from military success) increased economic unification and dynamism after 1871, supported by fast growing communication systems (railway and media) (ibid.:948).<sup>121</sup>

The German Imperial state ‘had to deal with strong particularisms in eastern Prussia, Bavaria and elsewhere, a potential liberal-democratic opposition, religious divisions and a rising labour movement, without the benefit of a centralized state apparatus (given the entrenched federalism of the constitution) or national cultural institutions’ (Eley 1986c:79). Under such conditions, the *Reich* was not able to initiate easily a form of ‘integral’ or ‘state-sponsored’ nationalism.<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, nation-building in the *Reich* was hampered by the

<sup>120</sup> For some specific groups of the population ‘Germany’ became much earlier an ‘experiential space’ because they were travelling a lot across state borders: in the course of university education, scholarly contacts, as part of an administrative career, or through exile (Echternkamp 1998:504). This was the case for most 1848 deputies. Trade obviously needs to be added to the list.

<sup>121</sup> The fact that nation-building in Germany coincided with industrialization allowed for the claim that its benefits (like an increased general standard of life and economic dynamism) were achievements ‘of the nation’ and of nationalism. At the same time it could be claimed that the nation-state was needed to resolve the specific problems that industrialization created (Wehler 1995:958). After 1878, the slogan ‘protection of national labour’ became common currency (ibid.:949).

<sup>122</sup> ‘Official nationalism ... may have helped temporarily to consolidate the alliance of the “ins” but it had the effect of alienating other groups’ (Hughes 1988:156). The relevance of ‘official nationalism’ is difficult to assess but should not be overrated. Nationalism is hardly ever a ‘strategy’ arbitrarily adopted (or not) by ‘the state’. Rather, the social and historical dynamic of society in its totality gives birth to ‘the state’ and also, as an aspect and effect of specific changes in society, drives this state towards transforming itself into a ‘national state’.

problem that 'the foundation of the national state did not lead to a creative unfolding of national culture' because its fixation on the new state meant it lost its reference to the German linguistic realm (Deuerlein 1970:255).<sup>123</sup>

The boom period of the 'Gruenderzeit'<sup>124</sup> began in 1867, massively intensified after the Franco-Prussian war. From 1867, Prussia and the North German Federation, after 1871 the *Reich*, also saw an encompassing series of economic reforms, chiefly the work of Rudolf Delbrueck and Otto von Camphausen ('confirmed "Manchester men"', as Pulzer notes) (Pulzer 1988:18). Freedom of trade was introduced in the *Gewerbeordnung* of 1869, the *Aktiennovelle* of 1870 abolished restrictions on the development of joint stock companies; the *Reichsmuenzgesetz* of 1871 and 1873 introduced the gold standard which helped 'encourage German business to go after a larger share of the world market' (Massing 1949:5).<sup>125</sup> Duties on pig iron, scrap and shipbuilding materials were abolished in 1873, those on half-finished iron products and machinery were halved and subsequently abolished in 1877.

Due to rapid industrialization prices for grain and for cultivated land rose sharply which encouraged agrarian capitalists in the early seventies to borrow money to be invested in land and in industrial methods to increase yield (Massing 1949:32).<sup>126</sup> When grain prices collapsed due to the industrial depression from 1873-78, worsened by the influx of cheap wheat from the USA and Russia, an agrarian crisis broke out that made conservatives (from the mid

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The defeat of democrats who opted for social reform in 1848 meant that class conflict became so obvious a reality – in the second half of the 1860s Germany saw an unprecedented series of strikes – that the emergence of independent labour organizations that stood in opposition to liberalism and bourgeois democracy was inevitable (Hardtwig 1993:27).

<sup>123</sup> Further, the new conception of culture as the supposed 'expression' of the specific national character of the 'Reichsnation' had the effect that the concept of culture was extended to any aspect of human existence which led – especially during the years immediately following the foundation of the *Reich* – to the disaffection of a large section of the cultural elite (Nietzsche would be an example) who turned against the Imperial 'nation-state' in the name of the values of classical, humanist German culture (ibid.).

<sup>124</sup> Pulzer translates *Gründer*, more commonly translated as 'founder' as 'promoter' which seems to be the correct technical term denoting a person who participates in the foundation of a company and for that purpose 'promotes' this company for fund-raising (Pulzer 1988:19).

<sup>125</sup> Between 1850 and 1875, 'the value of bank notes in circulation in Prussia increased from 18 million to 290 million *Taler*' (Blackbourn 1984:181). Before 1871 there were eight different silver based currencies in the German League. In the 1860s the relative values of silver and gold were quite unpredictable (one factor was the gold rush, another one the flow of silver to Asia); the transition to a unified gold currency seemed a way of handling this. Furthermore, the smaller German states endangered currency stability by being able to print paper money at will (Weber 1978).

1870s) call for protective tariffs on wheat. Because from the 1860s, the public image of liberalism had increasingly been identified with free trade policy (Langewiesche 2000:190), many blamed political liberalism for the crisis of 1873-5 (the '*Gruenderkrach*').<sup>127</sup>

The crisis forced industrial and agrarian capital to come to concerted action, negotiating their contradictory interests in low food prices (that meant low value of industrial labour power) on the one side, cheap industrial products and machines on the other side.<sup>128</sup> Bismarck managed to translate the changed constellation into the political sphere. Using the occasion of the two attempts on the life of the *Kaiser* (May 11, 1878; June 2, 1878) he intensified the fight against Social Democracy with the *Sozialistengesetz* and used the process of introducing this law to paralyze the liberals.

On the same day that the *Reichstag* passed the *Sozialistengesetz* (October 19, 1878), a 'Volkswirtschaftliche Vereinigung' consisting of deputies from Conservatives, National Liberals and Center issued a declaration cautiously calling for protective tariffs.<sup>129</sup> This was 'of the highest momentum for social

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<sup>126</sup> By 1880, two thirds of East Prussian *Rittergüter* were in bourgeois hands (Blackbourn 1984:182).

<sup>127</sup> There has been a long scholarly controversy whether there was a 'Great Depression' from 1873 – 1896 (Rosenberg 1967, Wehler 1995) or whether this is a myth (Saul according to Mommsen 1995:105; cp. also Eley 1986b). Mommsen in his summary assessment states that most scholars tend to reject the notion. He emphasizes that there have been repeated ups and downs in the period, and the development of different sections of production was extremely uneven due to the growing integration of the German economy into the world market. Even within the most dynamic areas, such as metal industry, only ever a small number of companies would do extremely well while many either catch up or go bust. Even if aggregate data suggest an economic boom during most of any given period, this does not at all mean that most companies, let alone most people did (or *thought* they did).

It seems safe to say that there was a period of stagnation between 1873 and 1878. 1879 – the year of the *Streit* – was the year of a weak economic recovery.

The agricultural crisis began in the 1870s (Mommsen 1995:107) but peaked only in 1894. Nevertheless, in the whole period agricultural productivity rose significantly, the absolute number of people employed in agriculture increased slightly. 'Generally speaking, the agricultural sector remained comparatively strong up to 1914' in Germany, contrasting sharply with the development in Britain for example (ibid.:108). 'Until 1914 the German Empire was both an agrarian *and* an industrial state'.

<sup>128</sup> The introduction of protective tariffs in July 1879 'represented the first modern piece of legislation in Germany to bear the stamp of a top-level business organization all over it' (Wehler 1985:86).

<sup>129</sup> The social powers behind the turn towards protectionism were mining and textile industry and to a lesser degree industrial agrarians (Winkler 1978:14). The petition was based on a compromise: tariffs on foodstuff (that increase costs of livelihood and thus wages) were meant to be balanced out by tariffs on finished products allowing industry to offset the increased wage costs. Two weeks later, a conference of the *German Chambers of Commerce* in Berlin also departed from free trade policies. In May 1879, 'the free traders' counterattack reached a high point' (Sheehan 1978:187) when representatives of seventy-two German cities – the grass-roots

history' (Sell 1953:271) because it was the first case of political cooperation between large scale agrarians and heavy industry,<sup>130</sup> and it made possible 'Bismarck's emancipation from liberalism' (ibid.).

Ludwig Bamberger suggested in his widely read manifesto 'The Secession' (1880) that

among all the civilized nations (Kulturländern), Germany has experienced least the political power of its *Buerkertum*. This means that feudal ideas have remained stronger here and that Socialist ideas have ... gained more and more power (quoted in Sheehan 1978:195).

Bamberger used this observation in order to explain the double phenomenon of Bismarck's successful outmanoeuvring the *National Liberal* party, and the growth of Social Democracy that was also to the disadvantage of the liberal parties.<sup>131</sup>

The Prussian state (and that of the *Reich* that it dominated) was old-fashioned in some respects, but modern in others (Hardtwig 1993:11).<sup>132</sup> The landed aristocracy in Prussia managed to emerge from the dissolution of feudal structures as an economically successful class in its own right that did not need the co-operation of the bourgeoisie (ibid.:22), so that aristocracy and bourgeoisie tended to maintain their separate cultural characteristics more than in England and France.

The characteristic feature of the modernization process in Germany is the extent of 'separation and conflict between the institutions specialising in administration and warfare on the one hand, and those specialising in economic and cultural activity on the other hand' (Breuilly 1994:293). The bourgeoisie was

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of German liberalism – met in Berlin and 'voted overwhelmingly to oppose any tariff on foodstuffs'. When the National Liberal faction was not able to decide on how to vote, fifteen right wing members left the party in July 1879 (amongst them Treitschke).

<sup>130</sup> It is not our concern here whether or not protective tariffs were economically necessary or at all beneficial to German economy of the time (cp. Winkler 1978:16). The point is that a significant enough portion of both industrialists and agrarians *thought it was necessary*; apart from their specific (lack of) understanding of political economy, nationalism might have been one of the elements in their thinking that made them think so.

<sup>131</sup> Bamberger's observation has later been taken up by a variety of authors in order to explain various aspects of German history – the 'Deutscher Sonderweg' argument – but has often been overburdened with claims to explanatory power that went far beyond what Bamberger, for example, intended to say.

more self-consciously bourgeois, and the nobility equally self-consciously aristocratic, while both contributed in their ways to 'modernization' (ibid.; similar: Kocka 1993:27).

However, in France and Britain as in Germany, the building of 'popular national identity', industrialization, capitalization and the creation of modern state structures – the main elements of 'modernization' – took place in the period 1800-70 (Breuilly 1994:285). Cobden found 'the Prussian bureaucracy with its specialized administrative functions ... clearly more modern than the English system...' (ibid.:287), while Bismarck as 'a radical-conservative modernizer ... had clear contemporary parallels in other European countries, such as Disraeli in Britain or Cavour in Italy' (Evans 1997:17).

Neither the exclusivist, executive, nor aristocratic features of the German polity before 1914 – that is, the checks on popular participation, the relative weakness of parliamentary controls, and the privileges of the titular nobility – were at all unusual by the European standards of the time. Indeed, the *Kaiserreich* was more frequently regarded as an exemplary 'modern' state – in the technocratic efficiency of its bureaucratic and military machines, in its more interventionist relationship to the economy and society, in the vaunted excellence of its municipal governments, in its system of social administration, and (from a different point of view) in the existence of universal suffrage and the extent of popular political mobilization (Eley 1996b:93).

Eley asserts that 'the German experience' of the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was 'a *successful* but conflict-ridden (conflict-ridden *because* so successful) capitalist modernization' (Eley 1996c :44; italics in the original). The formation of the German nation-state 'did indeed represent an intensified version of structures and processes at work in Western and Central Europe as a whole' (Evans 1997:18). The main 'particularities' according to Evans (ibid.:18) are the particular timing – German nation-building happened when industrialization and capitalist class-formation were already in full swing – and the size and economic power of Germany.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> 'Prussia [at the time of German unification] was not associated only with the barracks and the spiked helmet; it was broadly identified with the cause of modernity in fields ranging from education and communications to the scientific management of forests' (Blackbourn 1991:19).

<sup>133</sup> The fact that the nation state left 'millions of ethnic Germans outside its boundaries', providing extreme nationalists with an idealist sounding and superbly tempting excuse for conquest and expansion, was a further 'peculiarity'.

### 1.3.4. RELIGION

#### 1.3.4.1 The necessity of religion

In the modern period 'religion was subsumed (eingegliedert), and not overcome (aufgehoben)' as Adorno and Horkheimer wrote.<sup>134</sup> The German society of the second *Reich* might have been 'becoming increasingly secularized', but it was 'by no means secular' (Walser Smith 1995:85). Private and public, inner and outer, state and civil society needed a link of some sort, providing firm values, and this link was generally seen in 'culture'. 'Values' and 'culture' were, however, impossible to think of without reference to religion. Enlightenment liberalism developed two approaches to religion, which Smith calls a 'soft', or pluralist, and a 'hard', or rationalist tendency (ibid.:4). The former saw theological differences as not reconcilable and suggested their frictions could best be neutralized by creating 'a competitive market in religious sects' (ibid.:3) – the more there were the more peaceful it would be, not unlike today's notion of the 'multicultural society'. The other line of thinking was the idea that old time theology ought to be transformed into a new, rational form of religion (that very often was understood to be a continuation and extension of the Reformation). The rational religion would be universal, cosmopolitan, pure morality stripped of all institutional, historical and popular incrustation. Both the 'soft' and the 'hard' tendency are not, however, separate items: an emblematic thinker like Locke contributed to both at the same time.

When Locke (echoed for example by John Stuart Mill) argued that politics should not concern itself with religion, this did not mean it was independent from it. The tension between a secular state and a religious civil society was not abolished by decree. The resurgence of forms of religious enthusiasm that would challenge this precarious separation has never been absent from modern societies.

In this context, toleration was extended for the most part to the dissenting Protestant sects, not necessarily to Catholics, Jews and especially not to atheists. 'The point [of toleration] was to validate not every way of life and set of moral

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<sup>134</sup> They argue that when religion became a 'cultural artefact' (Kulturgut), only its 'reified forms' (verdinglichte Formen) survived while the 'element of truth' that they had carried and preserved (the Messianic promise of a better life) tended to be suppressed and made forgotten (Adorno/Horkheimer 1997/1971 [1944]:176/158).

beliefs but only enough of them to avoid the dangers of civil war' (Smith 1997:4). Within this logic, very small minorities (too insignificant to engage in a civil war) needed not be tolerated, and also if toleration of (Jewish and other) *traditional* religious practices seemed to jeopardize either the pluralist strategy, or the emergence of universalist 'rational religion', it could be rejected. Moses Mendelssohn argued for the extension of toleration to Judaism and Islam on the grounds that church, mosque and synagogue (not necessarily, however, the atheist reading club) could 'assist the government in inculcating moral reasons for obeying the law' (ibid.:172). Also in Mendelssohn's argument the toleration of diversity will best ensure that moderate, not too unreasonable religion will complement and support the purposes of the modern liberal state. The state should therefore grant the space for this to happen, while at the same time critically observe that toleration is actually being put to good use (ibid.:175).<sup>135</sup> Hegel rejects the notion that the spheres of politics and religion are 'mutually indifferent' (ibid.:195). He argues for religious toleration *because* the recognition of religious freedom asserts a crucial Protestant principle, the centrality of individual subjectivity that thereby interpenetrates the secular sphere. 'Hegel argues that to exclude Jews from civil rights would only confirm the separatism for which they have been reproached'. As it were, the modern state and society, united in the spirit of Protestantism, assert their world historical triumph by tolerating the remnants of religions that have had their glory days in the past. The case for toleration is here an expression of optimistic belief in the actuality of liberal progress.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Mendelssohn also makes the case for pluralism and diversity which are 'evidently the plan and purpose of Providence' (quoted ibid.:177). Apparently reflecting on the North American experience, he writes that the demand for religious uniformity was at odds with human nature.

<sup>136</sup> In the famous fragment from 1795, *The earliest program for a system of German Idealism* (at least co-written by Hegel) it is argued that religion and politics both teach 'contempt for humanity and the incapacity of man to realize the good and to achieve something through his own efforts' (ibid.:187). While this text seems to condemn positive religion *as such*, Hegel exempts Christianity from such condemnation in his *The spirit of Christianity and its fate* (1798-99): here he presents *Judaism* as the paradigmatic religion of despotism. Hegel quotes in this essay Tacitus' formulation 'odium generis humani' (allegedly the 'soul of Judaism'). Furthermore, he identifies Kant's ethics with Judaism's view of the law originating from a source wholly outside mankind. When Kant thought he had replaced the despotism of external law with the obedience to an inner law, Hegel now argued that Kant had not eliminated but merely internalized the formerly external despot (ibid.:189). In this essay Hegel attacks any form of legalism as so many denials of 'individuality' and 'life as it is' of particular persons; he suggests Christianity's doctrine of love constituted a crucial departure from the (Jewish) spirit of legalism. It seems plausible that many subsequent articulations of anti-Judaism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century took for example the reference to Tacitus from Hegel's essay. Even in his later writings in which Hegel



It is crucial to the discussion that the fate of Enlightenment, liberalism and emancipation is bound up with that of the modern state, the nation and the necessities they represent. Altogether, these form moments of the larger socio-historical framework of modern bourgeois society.<sup>137</sup> While Spinoza, Locke, Kant and others call for a civil and reasonable religion that would provide the necessary bridging of the gaps between private and public, civil society and the state, leaving the door open for various religions to join into a general neo-reformation movement, Hegel and then Treitschke – together with cohorts of others – claim straightforwardly what had previously at best been implied between the lines: this modern and reasonable religion already exists – more or less – in the form of *Protestant Christianity*. In this situation, the Jews and others have to double their effort to join the Protestant bandwagon of reasonable religion, or might find themselves being left behind.

#### 1.3.4.2 The form of religion

Religious conflict in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was neither anachronistic nor parochial but the meanings of 'religion' and 'confession' differed from earlier periods. At least three related tendencies that characterize religion in the modern period can be distinguished:

- *Clericalization*: the church hierarchy takes over, centralizes and standardizes the forms of religious life that had previously been much more local and village-centred.

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recognizes the Jewish contribution to the evolution of humanity's consciousness of freedom, Judaism is presented as a form of consciousness that has had its time: the Protestant articulation of the idea of 'inner freedom' has rendered all other religions so many stepping stones from the past to the present.

<sup>137</sup> The 'modern era' is the period in which 'modernization' of society took place, i.e. a historical period in which a specific set of structural changes occurred that resulted in the creation of 'bourgeois society'. The difficulty and complexity of the concept lies in the fact that beyond its historical-structural meaning, the concept 'modernity' also carries normative connotations, a set of promises – emancipation, humanity, human reconciliation in universal liberation – that 'modernization' has only begun to fulfil. The unfulfilled promises of 'the modern', the difference between 'modernity' and 'modernization', need to be salvaged against the reality of modern society as it currently exists. It is for this reason that 'modern bourgeois society' is not the pleonasm that it seems to be. Although it is less than clear what it would be, the notion of *another modernity* is not less relevant now than it was at any point in time before (cp. Salecker 1999:73f).

- *Politicization*: with the emergence of the modern state and of 'politics' as a separate sphere of activity, religion becomes one of their most effective tools.<sup>138</sup>
- *Individualization*: parallel to clericalization (*Verkirchlichung*) there is a growing tendency to *Ent-kirchlichung*, i.e. the emergence of a sphere of 'religiosity' different from, but not indifferent to formal, institutional and positive religion.

The interaction of these three tendencies produced the immense multiplicity of religious phenomena in the modern period. In the following section I will look at religion in the pre-nationalist formation of modern states, the transformation of religion into mere 'sets of beliefs' from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century on, the revival of piety in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the ambiguous role of religion for nationalism.

From the late fifteenth century 'the evangelization of the populace coincided with the development of what can loosely be called nation states' (Larner quoted in Sayer 1991:128). 'Post-Reformation Christianity' (including both Protestantism and counter-reformation Catholicism) was 'the world's first political ideology'. As reflected in early modern formulas such as *un foi, un roi, une loi* or *cuius regio eius religio*, modern religion was constituted in a contradictory development, as a private affair and a political affair at the same time. This contradiction reflects that 'the political' and 'the private' have never been located in separate or even independent 'spheres' to the extent that the accompanying (liberal) theory might have suggested.

In Germany, religious confessionalisation was bound with the emergence of territorial states (Schilling 1991:237). Religion provided rulers of early modern states with a powerful legitimation to challenge traditional and corporate (*ständische*) social and legal relations within their territory and also to consolidate its borders (*ibid.*:240) – in many ways not unlike nationalism would be used later.<sup>139</sup> Religion in the confessional age was also instrumental in

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<sup>138</sup> Religion as a 'tool' of politics needs to be distinguished from the 'moral-religious' view of social and economic processes that is characteristic of 'traditional' society where 'the economy' as a separate sphere in its own right, following its own 'a-moral' rules and laws, does not exist. The complex of processes usually summed up as 'modernization' includes the constitution of the sphere of 'the economy' (next to that of 'the political') and tends to provoke a 'moral-religious' reaction, too.

<sup>139</sup> '*Religio vinculum societatis*' was not a medieval idea but 'the axiom of early modern *Vergesellschaftung*' (*ibid.*:197). Cp also Hegel in a text of 1802: religion 'expresses the

imposing social discipline as well as first modern standards of moral and sexual behaviour: it was only in this context that the church (in either denominational form) took over the regulation of crucial social functions such as engagement and marriage ceremonies from local family and village structures (ibid.:241). In the same breath it fought also the heathen elements of popular piety.

The *Treaty of Westphalia* (1648) had aimed to create territories in the German area that were confessionally homogeneous to an extent comparable to that of most other early modern European states. However, this effort was undermined by both the resettlement of persecuted religious minorities in countries of different confession,<sup>140</sup> and by enlargement of states by annexing areas populated by people of different confession (especially Prussia and Bavaria) (Hoelscher 2001:42). The 'map-makers at Vienna boldly joined what those at Augsburg and Westphalia had so carefully kept asunder' (Anderson 2001:320), and the enormous increase in spatial mobility and urbanization throughout the nineteenth century intensified this mixing process.<sup>141</sup> Not surprisingly, German nationalism in the period after Napoleon and before 1848 searched for a singular, national religion that could bridge the confessional breach. Ernst Moritz Arndt for example claimed that 'Germany is the land of Protestantism' (Arndt in 1814, quoted in Altgeld 2001:52), while others searched for a synthetic form of Christianity beyond the Christian confessions (such as the late Fichte and Jacob Fries, one of the protagonists of the *Wartburg* festival in

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innermost being of all people, so that all external and diffuse matters aside, they can find a common focus and, despite inequality and transformations in other spheres and conditions, are still able to trust and rely on each other' (quoted in Altgeld 2001:54).

<sup>140</sup> Dutch, Belgian, French, Bohemian and Swiss Protestant refugees were welcomed by German governments because they came 'from culturally advanced regions' (Hoelscher 2001:43). Jews who were in a position of becoming instrumental to advancing modernization were also welcome although their relevance was actually much less central than has often been assumed. Hoelscher suggests that generally in (early) modern Europe, religious minorities that faced difficulties 'to maintain their religious integrity in an alien environment' (ibid.) tended 'to strive for economic and cultural success'.

<sup>141</sup> 'The demographic shifts that brought Catholics and Protestants into common space prefigured, far more than Bismarck's policy, the recrudescence of confessional conflicts in the Kaiserreich' (Walser Smith 1995:234).

The confessional mixing process through intra-state migration or changing state borders had different effects in the cities and on the countryside: amongst the more mobile and urban parts of the population (first of all, from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, the educated bourgeoisie), confessional distinctions appeared bridgeable the more personal belief gained in importance. Less mobile and more traditional groups reacted by re-affirming local church traditions. In Prussia after 1815 for example, Catholics reacted against the Prussian reform policy as much as did Lutherans and Calvinists against the state-led unification process of Prussian Protestantism (Hoelscher 2001:44f).

1817), or thought about pre-Christian religiosity rooted in the ethnic Germanic past (such as Jacob Grimm) (Altgeld 2001:55). In this context, anti-Jewish hostility was instrumental to the building of the synthetic, national religion: the Jews formed ‘a negative point of reference for an ideology of national-religious integration’ (ibid.:59).<sup>142</sup>

Modern society transformed traditional religions into ‘systems of belief’ and ‘confessions’ that one does or does not ‘have’.<sup>143</sup> ‘From around 1770 the theology of the Protestant Enlightenment distinguishes between a “public” and a “private”, an “outer” and an “inner” religion’ (Hoelscher 2001:36). Confession and belief<sup>144</sup> were conceived of as separate (although not independent) from each other<sup>145</sup> while religious orthodoxy (Jewish as well as Christian) tried to defend whatever had survived from pre-modern religion as a (formal-objective as well as spiritual-subjective) aspect of everyday practice.<sup>146</sup>

In either Christian confession, the twin trends of clericalization/ confessionalization and personalization/ individualization worked together – like a campaign on two fronts – against on the one hand, local, non-clerical traditions

<sup>142</sup> Hoelscher suggests that more than in England, France, Italy or Spain, nineteenth century piety created in Germany a plethora of sects and religious groupings that constituted a ‘vast religious spectrum’ characterized by ‘social and regional breaches’ (Hoelscher 2001:45f) that ‘rendered a *weltanschauliche* integration of society’ difficult. Society was not simply divided into an Enlightened, anti-clerical and a pro-clerical, conservative camp, but pious and dissenting groups could often oppose both ‘the established Church and its political allies in governments and bureaucracies’.

<sup>143</sup> The liberal notion of ‘having’ a religion presupposes social conditions in which one likewise ‘has’ a social position, a job (or, in German, a ‘Beruf’ [vocation]), political beliefs, ideologies, world views etc., all of which exist separate from each other (tentatively in real life, more strictly in discursive reflection). Although the modern world-view would admit that they ‘influence’ or ‘construct’ each other, it still postulates their existence as separate entities. The specific quality of ‘orthodox’ religious positions is their refusal to accept (some of) the categories and separations of modern bourgeois society.

<sup>144</sup> For the latter also ‘religiosity’ and ‘piety’ (in German, *Frömmigkeit*, which initially had the meaning of ‘hardworking goodness and honesty’; Hoelscher 2001:36)

<sup>145</sup> The centrality of individuality, personality, dignity and the urge to find individual expressions of belief (ibid.:36f) was in itself rather typical of the Protestant confession. It was in this context that family and educational institutions gained more influence on an individual’s religiosity, while the relevance of the church as such correspondingly decreased (ibid.:39f).

<sup>146</sup> Their understanding of religion as ‘entkirchlichte’ religiosity meant for example that Protestants did not always see decline in church attendance as something negative (Altgeld 2001:49). Walkenhorst argues that ‘religion’s evaporation into religiosity (*Verflüchtigung der Religion ins Religiöse*)’ (Walkenhorst 1996:524) was instrumental to the sacralization of the nation since it blurred the distinction between a ‘sacred’ and a ‘profane’ sphere. This was anticipated in 18<sup>th</sup> century and earlier theology by the notion of history as the arena in which God’s will reveals itself (Walkenhorst 1996:517). In this context, nationalism was not at all an *Ersatzreligion*, but nation could be an *Ersatz* for church and milieu as these had been discharged from ‘religiosity’ (ibid.:527): the nation seemed to give people back what had been lost when religion became religiosity.

of piety that was indifferent or even illoyal towards the church as an institution, and on the other hand the trend towards secularization (Blaschke 1997b:31 ff). Catholic clerical reaction in the form of ultra-montanism was accompanied by a campaign of spiritual – quasi evangelist – (Jesuit led) popular missions. On the Protestant side, there was the spiritual movement of pietism while clericalization (in Prussia, the main Protestant power) took the form of the *Prussian Unionist Church*<sup>147</sup>. In either case, the clerical and the spiritual movements overlapped but were not identical.

By the early nineteenth century, 'Catholic popular piety and the Catholic Church had been in ruins' (Altgeld 2001:49f), but both 'neo-traditional forms of mass-religiosity' and the institution of the Church itself (as the 'ultra-montane' church) went through 'a stupendous renewal' (ibid.:50) in the course of the nineteenth century. The 'new forms of integration, demarcation, and identity' that emerged in the nineteenth century in all confessions might have been misunderstood by some contemporaries and commentators as anachronistic leftovers of a religious past, but they were 'aspects of the modernization process' itself.<sup>148</sup>

'Ultra-montanism' introduced and reinforced an effective hierarchical institutional structure and reglementation and homogenization of piety and superstition, including that of anti-Semitism: the church partly opposed Jew-hatred, partly redefined and standardised it (Blaschke 1997b:31);<sup>149</sup> anti-Jewish riots should not break out 'spontaneously' but 'in ways defined by the clerics'.<sup>150</sup>

The twin phenomena of a popular pious movement coinciding with attempts by Rome to reinforce Papal authority within the church (largely connected with the name of Pope Pius IX)<sup>151</sup> were intensified in the fall of 1848 when the

<sup>147</sup> A crucial difference was that the latter was – in a Lutheran way – allied to the Prussian state.

<sup>148</sup> 'Severe and lasting intra-religious divisions occurred in the 1840s, especially in the cities' among Jews, Catholics and Protestants to similar degrees and as part of the same historical process (Smith/Clark 2001:13). 'Religious division, which Kant once believed would disappear with the passage of time, deepened in nineteenth-century Germany because of, not despite, social and demographic, cultural and political forces pushing for integration' (Walser Smith 1995:238). Walser Smith stresses that confessional conflict was part of the 'general processes of modernization' (ibid.:235), and those who took part in them could consider themselves forward-looking and modern, such as Protestant bourgeois or Catholic workers.

<sup>149</sup> It defined for example what a 'proper' ritual murder was supposed to look like.

<sup>150</sup> As an effect, riots that saw stones being thrown at the Jews *as well as* at the parish priest became a thing of the past (ibid.:40).

<sup>151</sup> The landmarks of ultra-montanism were the endorsement of the doctrine of 'Immaculate Conception' (1854), the anti-liberal '*Syllabus Errorum*' (1864) and the declaration of Papal

Catholic bishops of Germany agreed to commit the Church to a 'full-fledged campaign of popular missions (Volksmissionen) to restore faith, obedience and order among Catholics all across Germany' (Gross 2001:245). These missions were organized on behalf of the Church by religious orders, foremost the Jesuits.<sup>152</sup> Before the *Kulturkampf* began in 1871 in Prussia and on the level of the *Reich*,<sup>153</sup> it had already been fought – *avant la lettre* – in Bavaria and Baden in the wake of liberal economic reforms from 1863 on. The 'liberal Protestant educated middle classes' felt they had to defend modern culture against medieval barbarism.<sup>154</sup>

However, much more than that, 'for liberals the *Kulturkampf* meant ... a struggle to unlock the potential for social progress, freeing the dynamism of German society from the dead hand of archaic institutions' (Eley 1986 c:69). Central to this was defeating 'clerical control of charities, poorhouses and schools' (ibid.). The newly introduced freedom of enterprise and movement as well as attempts to put the riches of foundations (that had previously e.g. provided poor relief) to productive use underpinned the popular anti-liberal movement especially amongst the rural population. 'The fact that this anti-liberal popular movement was also a Catholic movement, increased the liberal readiness to pursue the *Kulturkampf* as a domestic preventative war against "Ultramontane anti-modernity" ...' (Langewiesche 2000:202). As if echoing Hobbes' warning that religion other than in the service of the (modern) state ('superstition') could

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infallibility (1870). The ideological struggle between liberalism and anti-liberal Catholicism constituted a 'pan-European' phenomenon (Langewiesche 2000:200). The death of Pope Pius IX in February 1878 gave Bismarck a good opportunity to phase out the *Kulturkampf* (Langewiesche 2000:195).

<sup>152</sup> They benefited from the Prussian constitution of 1850 that ended state intervention in ecclesiastical affairs.

The German *Reich* that ended in 1806 was inhabited by 60 per cent Catholics; the German *Bund* of 1815 by roughly 50 per cent, and the *Reich* of 1871 by one third (Altgeld 2001:51). However, they constituted much less than a third of the *Bildungsbürgertum* (Becker 2001:391).

<sup>153</sup> Virchow, one of the founders of the *Progress* party, is said to have coined the term 'Kulturkampf' (Massing 1949:214).

<sup>154</sup> Treitschke for example wrote that Rome's policy made him appreciate the value of Protestantism, and reminded him that 'the Pope is the Anti-Christ' (ibid.). Many (Lutheran) *Conservatives*, however, understood (correctly) that the *Kulturkampf* was not so much a denominational religious conflict but a struggle of secular authority against clerical authority and thus felt themselves under attack (Massing 1949:16).

While for many liberals *Catholicism* seemed a dangerous anachronism, for some the same was true for *Judaism*, while others saw *anti-Semitism* as part of a 'relapse' from modernity into 'the Middle Ages'. Whether any modern (in the widest sense, liberal) individual saw Catholicism, Judaism or anti-Semitism as tasteless and reactionary medieval anachronism,

become dangerous, the *Kulturkampf* was (also) the de-legitimization of an ideological resource for popular resistance to (capitalist) progress. Although conservative and 'anti-modern' (in the normative sense or the word), this resistance was, however, also part of the process of 'modernity' (in the sense of 'modernization').

Protestantism, too, especially in Berlin, went (after 1815) through a neo-pietist movement of religious revival (Clark 2001:72). This was paralleled by the state-led effort to unite Lutherans and Calvinists in the 'Church of the Prussian Union' (ibid.:74)<sup>155</sup> that included the standardization of rites, vestments and buildings 'down to the most minute details' (ibid.). Those who resisted the unification process (like the 'Old Lutherans') were depicted as troublemakers and subversives (ibid.:75). The Prussian Union 'was a church-state organism of a new type', an exercise in both 'disciplining the Church and sacralizing the state' (ibid.).<sup>156</sup>

While the war of 1866 had met substantial Catholic opposition, Protestants and Catholics hardly differed in their attitudes to the Franco-Prussian war (Becker 2001:394;395). Correspondingly, the Versailles proclamation of the *Reich* was strictly military and avoided a confessionally straightforward religious

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depended on what exactly that particular individual understood 'modernity' to be. This category is of course conveniently flexible to accommodate an array of different positions.

<sup>155</sup> This constituted an 'unprecedented confessional interventionism' on the part of the Prussian King, as Clark writes (ibid.).

<sup>156</sup> While Frederick William III maintained generally an Enlightened point of view, seeing religion as functional and subordinate to *raison d'état* and being only tangentially influenced by Pietist revivalism, Frederick William IV (from 1840) embraced the concept of the 'Christian state' and made conversion of the Jews an issue of state policy (ibid.:77). Friedrich Julius Stahl, a convert from Judaism and a director of a Berlin based society for the conversion of Jews, developed the concept in his *The Christian State* (1847). Stahl argued that the state was 'a revelation of the ethical spirit of a nation', and since ethics in turn were grounded in religion, the state had to express, propagate and realize in practice the values of the nation's religion (i.e. Christianity). Stahl rejected in particular the traditional (especially Lutheran) view that the earthly realm ought to be kept separate from the 'Kingdom of God', and argued that the state was an instrument for remodelling the former on the image of the latter (ibid.:79). Church and state were to be separate but not 'apart'. He applauded the Emancipation edict of 1812 for exemplifying the generosity of the Protestant spirit but still safeguarding the Christian character of the state. Although Stahl's concept of the 'Christian state' never unequivocally became the basis of government policy, it was reflected for example in article 14 of the Prussian constitution of 1850 (that also remained valid after 1871) which stated: 'The Christian religion is taken to be the basis of those institutions of the state that are connected with the practice of religion, regardless of the freedom of religion guaranteed in article 12' (ibid.:83). In contrast to the rhetoric of the 'Christian state' of the 1880s and 1890s, Stahl's concept was, though, grounded in a notion of Christianity as a spiritual aim of *humanity* that needed to be served by the state, not in Christianity as a

ceremony (ibid.:396). Even the concept of the 'Reich' itself could be understood as an 'offer of integration' to Catholics. The majority of educated Catholics welcomed the *Reich* of 1871,<sup>157</sup> although they might have understood it as a first instalment to later *grossdeutsche* unification (ibid.:402).<sup>158</sup>

Of course, members of differing faiths 'constructed their national identity differently, appealing to different traditions, separate memories, another history' (Walser Smith 1995:238). While Protestant nationalists saw Luther as a founder of the German nation, Catholics tended to see him as a traitor who had invited foreign powers to intervene in Germany and caused its disintegration (Becker 2001:404). As Walser Smith writes, the problem of 'national unity in a polity with a divided memory' is a 'peculiarly modern' one (Walser Smith 1995:235) – after all, 'national unity' is a 'peculiarly modern' phenomenon anyway. The salient question is, *why* does 'divided memory' constitute *a problem*: why did Protestants imagine the Catholics, or the Jews, as disloyal when they actually were not?<sup>159</sup>

The integration of a Catholic into the nation cannot happen in exactly the same way as that of a Protestant: for the one, Bonifatius must be a national hero, for the other Luther (for a Jewish German nationalist probably Mendelssohn or Börne). One might expect that the promoters of nation-building should always and everywhere have appreciated that different groups of the population accommodate themselves in differing ways to the nation, and should have recognized that allowing this to happen is in the nationalist interest. After all, the actual day to day mechanics of modern society make sure that the ultra-montanist, the Pietist and the Social Democrat will work the same shifts, pay the same taxes and die in the same trench (unless, of course, these 'group identities' happen to coincide with specific class positions). However, the advantages of a 'multicultural' capitalist development are so obvious only in the perspective *after the event*, and the actual builders of modern nations more often than not have been blind to the blessings of 'celebrating diversity'.

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particular positive characteristic of a particular *Volk* (the German people) that needed to be reflected in the character of the state that was inhabited by that *Volk*.

<sup>157</sup> 'Catholics in Imperial Germany rarely questioned the legitimacy of the national state as it was founded in 1871' (Walser Smith 237f).

<sup>158</sup> This perspective seemed to be confirmed by the 'Dual Alliance' with Austria (1879).

<sup>159</sup> *Mutatis mutandis*, the same is true for the socialists. When it came to the crunch, a huge majority was as loyal and patriotic as liberals or conservatives were.



The point seems to be that religion is more than just an integrating ideology instrumental to nation-building. The more religion demands the believer to take *serious* its specific national-religious narrative, the more it reproduces difference and antagonism to the extent that it can become an obstacle to, more than an instrument of, nation-building. It is in this sense that nationalism's reliance on and subsumption of religion is a double-edged sword.<sup>160</sup> Religion is a unifying as well as divisive element. However, this dialectic takes many forms as Walser Smith shows: in the last decades of the *Kaiserreich*, Catholics and Protestants learned to create a *common* national culture based on '*shared antagonisms*' (Walser Smith 1995:239): it was agreed between them to maintain confessionally exclusive schools, high grain tariffs, the protection of 'public morality' against (what they thought were) 'the evils of modernity', and antipathy towards Jews, ethnic minorities and Social Democracy. As it were, they marched separately but fought together.

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<sup>160</sup> Again, the same is true – *mutatis mutandis* – for socialism, too. On the one hand, nationalists could hardly do anything better than putting socialism into the service of creating an 'imagined' unity of 'the people' that obscures the divisions and antagonisms that characterize modern society. On the other hand, they will always have to struggle within that construction to contain or destroy any challenges to the subsumption and obfuscation of these antagonisms. Wherever theory sees 'function', historical practice shows struggle. In the same vein, nationalists could not do better than – after some hesitation – allowing women to be nationalist in a 'female', or even in a feminist way. To the extent that nation-building was presented as the highway to emancipation of women (or workers or Jews or...), the actual leaders of 'the nation' (who tended not to be women, workers, Jews themselves) had to make good on some of the promises involved. This could not but create frictions and contradictions.

### 1.3.5. EMANCIPATION

#### 1.3.5.1 The concept of 'emancipation'

The word 'emancipation' stems from Roman law where it denotes a legal act in which a *paterfamilias* could release a child from the authority of the father, which gave the child – not anymore a member of the family but a *persona sui iuris* – the right to own and accumulate property (Raber 1979:255). To grant emancipation or not was completely up to the father – under no circumstances was there a 'right' of the child to be emancipated (Grass/Koselleck 1975:154). The word entered the European vernaculars between the 14<sup>th</sup> (Italian, French) and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (English, German) where it assumed extra - legal meanings. In this process, it was linked to the concept of 'coming of age' (from customary law) and assumed thus a connotation of self-empowerment based on the natural process of 'growing up'. Under *ancien régime* conditions, and *outside* the specific legal context,<sup>161</sup> to 'emancipate oneself' or to act in an 'emancipated' way tended to carry a negative connotation in the sense of 'taking (too many) liberties' (ibid.:158f). It was only in the context of the French Revolution that the word (in its casual, not its legal meaning) was transferred from denoting (unruly, disrespectful) moral-ethical behaviour to the political realm where it was used with either strong positive or negative evaluation. When those using the word with positive evaluation exploited the powerful analogy with the human being's 'coming of age', their opponents would point out that society, or social groups, do not 'grow up' in the same way a child 'naturally' does, and therefore ought not to 'emancipate themselves' in the same way. They would see the claim to (self-) emancipation and release from fatherly/princely authority as expression of insubordination leading to anarchy (ibid.:162f; cp. also: Rürup 1987:162).

A crucial moment of the debate was Kant's use of the concept of 'man's release from his self-incurred tutelage'<sup>162</sup> in his essay 'What is Enlightenment' (1784) (Kant 1969). Kant argued that human beings were already 'released into majority' by nature ('naturaliter maiorennes') but still had to 'come of age' also

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<sup>161</sup> The word as the name of a legal act (with slightly varying meanings) never wholly disappeared from European legal codes and played a more central role again in the Napoleonic *Code Civil* (ibid.:156).

<sup>162</sup> 'Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbstverschuldeten Unmündigkeit'

intellectually and politically. For that they had to 'dare' to challenge whatever held them back in their state of unfreedom and 'tutelage'.

Although Kant avoided using the word,<sup>163</sup> it was possible for contemporaries to synthesize the concept of (auto-)emancipation with Kant's call for *Muendigwerdung* (Grass/Koselleck 1975:163f). As a result the proposition that the 'growing up' of adolescents is a 'natural' process of human being's ethical and intellectual maturing could be invoked to support liberal political demands which were thereby given the appearance of 'natural' demands (obscuring that the latter are in fact *social-historical* processes).

One of the strengths of the concept of 'emancipation' was its double meaning as denoting a singular legal *act* as well as a prolonged social-historical *process*, allowing the implication that the demand for the legislative act of emancipation obviously and inevitably followed from the fact of the progressing 'maturity' of society. In the process, (after the French Revolution) the concept of 'emancipation' also extended its applicability: not only individual persons as in the legal context, but estates, classes, social groups in general, women, peoples or nations and finally, humanity, were supposed to be in the process of 'emancipating themselves' (ibid.:166). The process of concept-formation was completed in the German-speaking countries around 1830 when 'emancipation' became general currency as a key political concept.<sup>164</sup>

The first use of the concept of 'emancipation' with reference to the Jews seems to have been made by the Kantian philosopher Wilhelm Traugott Krug in 1828<sup>165</sup> who advocated (in the vein of Humboldt, who was also a Kantian) a single legal act of *Gleichstellung* (Grass/Koselleck 1972:166). The word was immediately generally adopted. Krug explicitly referred to the debate in the English parliament of the same year on 'Catholic emancipation' and the fact that also in England it was for the first time used for the Jewish case (Katz 1972:37). It was enthusiastically adopted (and no less enthusiastically rejected by critics) because the term 'emancipation' implied 'that natural rights had been withheld

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<sup>163</sup> Kant did not use the word because for him the decisive act was *not* a natural, but an intellectual-moral process of maturing.

<sup>164</sup> However, as a *legal* concept, 'emancipation' continued to be used exclusively in its traditional meaning; none of the laws that concern what commonly came to be called 'Jewish emancipation' actually used the word.

<sup>165</sup> Wilhelm Traugott Krug: 'Über das Verhältnis verschiedener Religionsparteien zum Staate und über die Emanzipation der Juden', Jena 1828

till then from those concerned, and that these must be restored to them unconditionally'.<sup>166</sup> In this implication, the concept went far beyond what had previously been discussed under one of the equivalents of 'Verbesserung', let alone 'naturalization'.<sup>167</sup>

In the years preceding 1848, the concept 'emancipation' became 'something like the lowest common denominator of all groups that urged social change' and were 'excluded from immediate political and social power positions' (Grass/Koselleck 1972:164f). The demand for emancipation became more self-evident as an issue in its own right, less dependent on specific arguments, and was thus increasingly disconnected from a discourse of 'betterment' and 'civilization', which receded into the background (Rürup 1969:79f). The rhetoric of 'freedom' and 'equality' tended to replace reference to the 'mechanics of the state' and societal progress.<sup>168</sup>

### 1.3.5.2 The discourse on the 'Jewish problem' before the French Revolution

The starting point for the early emancipation debate was 'the mass of the poor Jews' who engaged in the 'destitute trades' ('Nothandel') (Rürup 1969:70) (peddling, pawnbroking, second hand clothes trading)<sup>169</sup> and constituted an

<sup>166</sup> The promise of emancipation meant – or seemed to mean – the prospect that Jews could 'secure civic integration without the quid pro quo of religious conversion or the provision of specific utilitarian services to the state and its rulers, as had been the case for the several hundred Court Jews...' (Birnbau/Katznelson 1995:3)

<sup>167</sup> Katz points out that for example in the writings of Gabriel Riesser, the word 'emancipation' is used when a more emotional and evocative word is needed, and the equivalent 'bürgerliche Gleichstellung' is used when a more sober and technical term is needed (Katz 1972:44). Rürup adds that the term 'emancipation' had occasionally been used with reference to the Jews in German petitions already since 1817 (Rürup 1987:160ff).

<sup>168</sup> Rotteck argued in 1833 that legal restrictions existed not only for Jews but also for women, servants and proletarians, and if one wanted to abolish all these distinctions one should rather 'wear the red cap of the Jacobins' (Rürup 1987:198). It would be worth looking at in more detail the 'striking congruence' of the discussions on the 'Arbeiterfrage' and 'Judenfrage' (Biefang 1999:53). In both 'questions', admission to bourgeois society was made conditional on material as well as cultural adaptation to bourgeois standards. In the case of workers, the road to citizenship led through 'learning and saving'. The concept of 'emancipation' is of course also central to the 'woman's question'. For the *quid pro quo* character of emancipation, cp. the following quotation from a speech by the National Liberal politician, Johannes Miquel addressing an assembly of workers in 1867: 'My dear Sirs! You are from the workers' estate, and you have won a precious right without doing anything at all to get it. Every man in the population is equal. ... But these great rights are associated with great duties. No one receives a right without a duty. The duty consists in the workers' estate enlightening itself, so that it no longer just lives, but so that it develops its own conviction as to what is needed for its estate, for itself and above all for the Fatherland' (Langewiesche 2000:108). The 'congruence' could not be more striking.

<sup>169</sup> Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, very small numbers of central European Ashkenasim demonstrated their ability to join the wealthy and educated bourgeoisie in a way that had seemed an exclusive

‘unbearable’ condition for Christian society.<sup>170</sup> This problem was meant to be tackled by (what only decades later would be called) ‘emancipation’. ‘The remedy of past centuries, the expulsion of the Jews across state borders, was no longer acceptable in the age of the enlightenment, nor did it promise a lasting solution’ (ibid.:71). Modernizing state-officials like Dohm suggested ‘liberation from the traditional legal disabilities’ (ibid.), i.e. inclusion of the Jews into the modernizing state policy.<sup>171</sup> The enlightenment insight that ‘the Jew’ was a product of past policies went together with the confidence that what had been *made* could also be *un-made* and *re-made*.<sup>172</sup>

For a long time – before ‘emancipation’ became the keyword – the legal term central to debates on the position of the Jews was ‘naturalization’, which ‘was the term for allowing aliens to acquire the rights due by nature to those born in the country’ (Katz 1972:25). The argument for Jewish ‘naturalization’ was that Jews should no less than Protestants be allowed to settle in England if economically desirable, and be granted the freedoms of making their living and of ‘making laws amongst themselves’ (ibid.:26). ‘No political or social integration into the surrounding society was envisaged.’<sup>173</sup>

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prerogative of the Sephardim of for example Bordeaux, Amsterdam or London. This also threw a new light on the destitute and uneducated Jews of Europe (Rürup 1987:96).

<sup>170</sup> At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Germany, three groups of Jews can be distinguished: the few hundred Court Jews; the limited group of licensed Jews who had permission to settle and trade; and the much larger group of illegitimate Jews (‘unvergleitete’) who tried to find niches to survive. The latter constituted a precarious group not unlike today’s illegal immigrants (Jersch-Wenzel 1974:368). It was official state policy to take maximum advantage from the smallest possible number of Jews (not unlike today’s immigration policies).

<sup>171</sup> The catalogue of economic restrictions that Dohm suggested be imposed on the Jews is discussed in Salecker (1999:103).

<sup>172</sup> Locke in his ‘Letter concerning toleration’ (1689) (in which Jews are only mentioned twice) argues that ‘neither Pagan, nor Mahumetan, nor Jew, ought to be excluded [on religious grounds] from the civil Rights of the Commonwealth, ... which embraces indifferently all Men that are honest, peaceable and industrious’ (Locke 1983:54). Katz argues that Locke’s brief remarks anticipated some of the developments that occurred in the century preceding the French Revolution, in particular the growing conviction that the position of the Jews should be discussed in terms of their ‘economic merits or demerits rather than in terms of their religious divergence’ (Katz 1972:24).

<sup>173</sup> This is still the case with John Toland’s pamphlet, ‘Reasons for Naturalising the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland on the Same foot with all nations’ (1714). Toland defends here a Whig law (that had just been suspended by a Tory government) that allowed Protestants of any confession to immigrate and acquire citizenship. Toland argued this should be extended to Jews so that Jews would be allowed to immigrate and then be treated like all other *Jews* – which did not mean ‘emancipated’ (Katz 1972:27). However, opponents of the bill, and some commentators in Germany, suggested it meant an actual enlargement of the rights of the Jewish population (ibid.:31). Only indirectly did the text help prepare the discourse on emancipation since Toland rejected the notion of an inherent and unchangeable Jewish nature and for the first time ‘applied a central principle of European rationalism – the essential oneness of all human nature – to the case of the Jews’ (ibid.:29). The cause advocated by Toland in 1714 was defeated by public discussion

The text that most clearly signalled a change was Dohm's 'On the civic improvement of the Jews' (1781). Dohm put the question of emancipation in the larger framework of re-defining the tasks of (modern) government with respect to society.<sup>174</sup> Dohm describes the transformation of the *Gesellschaften* and *Verbindungen* – corporations, estates and so on – of *traditional* bourgeois society into the layers, classes and groupings of *modern* bourgeois society. He points to a characteristic dialectic of continuity and change: social groupings continue to exist, and they still 'indulge' in prejudices and 'exclusive principles', but rather than existing statically next to each other, they engage in dynamic competition and form a harmonious whole, the modern 'state'.<sup>175</sup> The task of 'government' is to help 'harmony' to emerge by 'attenuating' social separations: the 'great harmony of the state' is not based on the abolition of separation and prejudices but their transformation. Dohm's notion of harmony is a dynamic rather than a static harmony: the state's members 'love' and recognize each other individually as 'citizens' but are in competition with each other as members of social strata, groups and classes.<sup>176</sup>

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in England in 1753, after which time 'the Jewish question as a matter of public concern in England was laid to rest for some eighty years' (ibid.:30). From the 1750s onwards, new impulses to the issue came first of all from the context of the German Enlightenment.

<sup>174</sup> 'It is the great and noble business of government so to attenuate the exclusive principles (ausschliessenden Grundsätze) of all those various societies (Gesellschaften) that they do not damage (nicht nachteilig werden) the large common link (der grossen Verbindung) that embraces all of them; that each of these divisions (Trennungen) shall stimulate only competitiveness (Wetteifer) and activity rather than dislike and distance; and that all of them are resolved (sich alle auflösen) in the great harmony of the state. The government ought to allow each of those special groupings (besonderen Verbindungen) to indulge in its pride, even in its not damaging prejudices; but it also ought to strive to instil yet more love in every single one of their members, and it will have achieved its great task when the nobleman, the peasant, the scholar, the artisan, the Christian and the Jew are, beyond and above all that, *citizens*' (Dohm 1781, quoted in Rürup 1969:72; translation amended).

<sup>175</sup> 'State' means here what in today's parlance would rather be called 'society', while we tend to use 'state' and 'government' as near synonyms.

<sup>176</sup> One of the themes of Dohm's argument for Jewish emancipation was the static character of ('ständische') corporate society. Dohm suggested that Jewish emancipation, if possible combined with the abolition of the guilds, would lead to increased competition, dynamism and productivity (Möller 1980:134). Dohm commented (in a text from 1815) on Joseph II's edict of toleration arguing that it had remained ineffective because it was not accompanied by a program of reforming 'inclinations, mentalities and habits of the nation' which could only be the result of a long term process (ibid.:142).

Mendelssohn (1782) rejected Dohm's suggestion to leave Jewish communal jurisdiction intact. Mendelssohn argued the rabbis should not have the power to exclude dissidents from the community (Möller 1980:146) – Mendelssohn might have had the fate of Spinoza on his mind. The thinking of the philosopher was here more radical than that of the state official.

'While in England' – where only a minute number of Jews had been admitted by and since Cromwell – 'the question still revolved around the admission of foreign Jews, in Germany it turned into the question of granting equal rights' not least because most German territories had

Amongst the concerns of Prussian absolutism were raising productivity, abolishing traditional intermediate structures and creating an unmediated relationship between state and individual. However, there is also evidence of a policy of *preventing* Jewish assimilation and preserving the Jewish community as a segregated, semi-autonomous unity – obviously contradicting the general policy of mobilizing as much productive potential in all sectors of society as possible. This puzzling contradiction can be explained in terms of the absolutist state's dependence on state credit: only Jewish bankers were prepared to engage in this (at the time, and on its enlarged scale) new and risky business (Arendt 1973:15). The latter were in turn, however, only in a position to accumulate money capital by appropriating it from the Jewish community, which constituted a monopoly clientele for Jewish bankers. Jewish emancipation depended on the growth of a new type of state – independent from the existing groups and structures of civil society – which, however, in turn depended on the continued existence of the Jews as a group distinct from all other social groups. Therefore, emancipation took first of all the form of the extension of privileges to gradually ever larger groups of Jews.<sup>177</sup>

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admitted the (re-)settlement of Jews (Katz 1972:31). Strangely, the German discussion used for what subsequently would be called 'emancipation' initially the word 'naturalization', adopted from the English context but with its meaning changed. Dohm's book of 1781, that used the formulation 'bürgerliche Verbesserung' in its title, ended this use of the word 'naturalization'. What half a century later would be called 'emancipation' was then referred to as *Verbesserung*, *Veredelung*, *Reformezirung* or *Régénération* (ibid.:32). Mendelssohn, interestingly, replaced 'Verbesserung' in his discussion of Dohm's text with 'bürgerliche Aufnahme', 'civil acceptance' (ibid.:35). Mirabeau's French translation of Dohm's text used the words 'De la réforme politique des Juifs' (ibid.:36). The novelty in Dohm's work, and others that subsequently embraced the option of 'emancipation' was the assumption that the Jews could – sooner or later – be citizens of the state.

Dohm's and others' argument for emancipation was based on the theoretical assumption of the separation of state and church as had been first propounded by Locke (Katz 1972:94). However, during the period, separation of Church and State was rarely the case. This implied that wherever Jewish *Gleichstellung* was achieved, it was achieved on the basis of a state that was not consistently separated from religion. In this context, emancipation implied not the complete secularization of the state, but state recognition *also* for the Jewish religion. Katz points out that the liberal Gabriel Riesser for example had appreciated the notion that rabbis would receive a state salary like priests did (ibid.:95).

<sup>177</sup> The last remains of the special relationship between state and privileged Jews ended in the context of the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when also 'Jewish wealth had become insignificant' (Arendt 1973:15).

Another aspect of the process for which 'emancipation' is a kind of shorthand, was that the 'networks Jews could join multiplied, as their isolation diminished. As a result, the capacity of organized Jewish communities to control deviant behavior became more tenuous' (Birnbaum/Katznelson 1995:11). This would have been a worrying perspective for the conservative and clerical elements within the community.

However, there is also an important element of modernization that was in the interest of the Jewish elite. The traditional corporate status of the Jews implied that every member of the group

### 1.3.5.3. The discourse on emancipation of the Jews since the French Revolution

In the debate on Dohm's text, opinions differed as to *how much* government guidance was needed to create 'great harmony' out of the 'various societies' that were in the process of transforming themselves into a dynamic and competitive modern society. While Dohm's was a middle position, some argued that the social process could sort out itself without state guidance at all since 'betterment' or 'polish' was the product only of freedom. Others held against this that the sudden decreeing of freedom would rather worsen the Jews' situation because decrees would not change the prejudices of the population and would fail to protect the Jews against hostilities (Rürup 1969:73). The theoretical discussion amongst the enlightened reformers – in Germany as well as in France where the German debate was closely followed – was, however, resolved not by more or less persuasive reasoning but by the different courses of events: the French Revolution and the processes that were triggered or intensified by it.<sup>178</sup>

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was held responsible for every other – which must have been quite unappealing for the educated members of the community who culturally tended to share more characteristics with their Christian class peers than with the poor Jews. They were likely to embrace the idea of educating the Jews towards productive activities (their 'Produktivierung') for three reasons: the more productive the Jews became the less unproductive surplus eaters had to be fed; the group as a whole would be less objected to by the Christian elites; and the appreciation of artisanal work was also in accordance with the artisanal tradition of rabbinical ethics (Bermann 1973:47). Support by the Jewish elites for dissolving the extra-societal status of the Jewish poor had to increase in particular after the special role of Jewish bankers (the only good reason for them to maintain the ancient conditions) lost its relevance in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

There is a strong tradition of calls for forcing the Jews into agriculture and productive work starting from the Constance Concile (1414-1418), through Martin Luther (who qualified however that if the productivization of the Jews would mean competition for Christian peasants or artisans they should rather be driven out) into Enlightenment conceptions including Dohm, Abbé Grégoire and Humboldt (ibid.:48). In 1780s Prussia and afterwards, in a number of instances there was co-operation between the Jewish elite and the reform administration in the effort to change the professional structure of the Jews (ibid.:49ff). However, in the longer term these efforts could not overcome the resistance of 'zünftige' industry, and many newly trained Jewish artisans emigrated to America where they found work instantly without economic discrimination (ibid.:51).

'As early as the 1730s, the Pietist missionaries of the *Institutum Judaicum* in Halle had begun to redefine "conversion" from Judaism to Christianity in occupational and sociological terms that prefigured the debates of the later Enlightenment' (Clark 2001:85).

For Hegel, the path to emancipation leads through 'labour and education'. The 'Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden' was founded on this platform (Claussen 1994a:133), and in this context the word 'Produktivierung' seems to have been coined. In the *Kaiserreich*, there were renewed attempts at establishing artisanal training for Jews, this time however rather in opposition to the general economic trend and more clearly as an attempt to 'prove wrong' anti-Semitic propaganda (Bermann 1973:60), without much effect.

<sup>178</sup> 'Whereas in France action had been confined to one single act of emancipation leaving social integration to the unfettered interplay of social forces, opinion in Germany continued to look



The most emblematic formulation of the position taken by the revolutionaries is that of Clermont-Tonnere in the National Assembly 25 December 1789:

Everything should be denied to the Jews as a nation; everything should be granted to them as individuals. They are obliged to become citizens. Some argue they do not want to be. Let them say this themselves, and let them then be expelled. It is impossible for them to be a nation within a nation (quoted in Katz 1972:67).

‘Nation’ is in this context a near synonym for ‘estate’ – it does not mean ‘nation’ in the modern sense (as in ‘nation-state’).<sup>179</sup>

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upon the state as an educational as well as legal institution, which accordingly was obligated to discharge its responsibility towards society also in respect of the Jews’ (ibid.:73).

While before 1791, either line of thinking had been present in the German and the French discussion on the ‘betterment of the Jews’ alike, subsequently they would often be dubbed the French ‘liberal-revolutionary’ and the German ‘enlightened-etatist’ model of emancipation (ibid.). These shorthand concepts are, however, rather simplistic: one could just as well talk about an enlightened-revolutionary and liberal-etatist tradition. The ‘German view’ of the necessity of educationally motivated state restrictions of economic and social liberties was invoked by Napoleon in 1808, which was seen by German contemporaries as a confirmation of their view. Napoleon’s decree remained valid for ten years (Rürup 1987:173).

<sup>179</sup> ‘Nation within a nation’ is a variation on a then common phrase, ‘state within the state’ (Katz 1972:67) which is a formula that was meant to assert state sovereignty against intermediate corporations. In the period beginning with the French Revolution, the phrase’s meaning changed: it ‘now served as the justification for denying the Jews the right to remain a separate social group, engaging in distinguishable economic activities and evincing religious principles and a spiritual outlook inconsonant with that of the Christian majority’ (ibid.:68). In this meaning, the slogan never disappeared from the anti-Jewish literature of the nineteenth century.

However, Clermont-Tonnerre’s assertion that the Jews deserved nothing ‘as a nation’ did not mean, incidentally, that they ‘were expected to disavow their heritage in order to enjoy the benefits of citizenship’ as is often anachronistically assumed (Feldman 1998:176). The discussion in the *National Assembly* was about replacing mediation by corporate bodies by a new, direct relation between state and individual and did not imply – at that time – that Jewish ‘cultural identity’ had to be given up. ‘Before 1880 the state in Britain, France and Germany was less demanding and less effective in securing its demands than has been presented in many accounts’ (ibid.:177). ‘It is clear that the ambitions of modern states to purge themselves of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural diversity have been grossly overestimated.’

The liberal understanding of society that underpinned Clermont-Tonnere’s statement has been expressed by Robespierre: ‘J’entends par peuple la généralité des individus qui compose la Société’ (quoted in Bermann 1973:43).

Ironically, the accusation of forming a ‘state within the state’ began being directed at the Jews only when their institutional autonomy actually was in the process of dissolution. At the same time, the kind of social group that the Jews formed – different from what had previously been estates and corporations – was not at all an anomaly in modern bourgeois society. ‘Social groups organized on the basis of class origin and against the background of religion and profession continued to exist’ as Katz observes (Katz 1972:76).

The phrase, ‘a state within a state’, writes Katz, ‘expresses negatively what the term “sovereignty” denotes positively’ (ibid.:49). The first and only source where the formula is expressly defined is a text from 1760 in which it is argued that a sovereign ruler must not allow ‘status in statu’, citing as an example the Spanish Inquisition (ibid.:50). However, the phrase has

Katz argues that during the *ancien régime* the Jews were not considered 'a state within the state' because they were seen as strangers anyway. The abolition of their corporate status did not in itself make the Jews citizens (as was the case with non-Jews) (ibid.:60). The call for abolishing mediating social institutions was *in the case of Gentiles* a call to make all members of such corporations immediate citizens of the state. The dissolution of the *Jewish* corporations, however, threw up the alternative either to drive the Jews out, or to create new legal grounds for their presence, i.e. individual citizenship. This is the logical starting point of the 'Jewish Question' that for a prolonged period of time remained undecided.<sup>180</sup>

In the German context after the French Revolution the most important statement on the issue was Wilhelm von Humboldt's comment on the draft of the *Prussian Edict of Emancipation* (1809). Humboldt suggests there are three means for resolving 'the Jewish condition'<sup>181</sup>, 'amalgamation' (*Verschmelzung*), 'destruction of their ecclesiastical organization' (*Zertruemmerung ihrer kirchlichen Form*) and 're-colonisation' (*Ansiedelung*) (Humboldt 1964:96). At the same time he famously advocates 'immediate emancipation' (*plötzliche Gleichstellung*) because this is the only just and politically efficient measure (ibid.).<sup>182</sup> Civil rights can not be made dependent on what the actual character of a group of persons is. Should the Jews fail to fulfill their civic duties they should be expelled rather than being granted civil rights conditionally only (ibid.:100).

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always been 'a political slogan' rather than an analytical category (ibid.:51). In France the term often referred to the Huguenots, then to the Jesuits. Diderot's *Encyclopédie* which began to appear in 1751, emphatically promoted the idea of undivided sovereignty of the state, criticized intermediate bodies, corporations and orders (ibid.:52) and supported their abolition – such as through the expulsion of the Jesuits from France in 1764 (ibid.:53). From the 1760s onwards, also the Freemasons were accused of forming a state within the state (ibid.:53f). The phrase was first used against Jews in 1779 in Alsace (ibid.:56). A second example quoted by Katz is by a writer who refuted Mendelssohn's suggestion that atheists (rather than Jews) should be excluded from citizenship with the argument that atheists who fulfilled their social obligations according to 'natural morality and reason' should be citizens, while the Jews willingly sought 'to constitute a state with a state' and on these grounds should not have citizenship (ibid.:57). Also in the tract by Père Grégoire, *Essay sur régénération physique et politique des juifs* (1789) the phrase can be found. This author argues that only the current situation made the Jews 'a state within a state' (ibid.:58).

<sup>180</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the phrase 'a state with the state' was predominantly used against the Jews (and also still against the Freemasons) (ibid.:65).

<sup>181</sup> He defines this as their 'disproportionate visibility' (*unverhältnismässige Wichtigkeit*).

<sup>182</sup> He repeatedly asserts that partial *Gleichstellung* would increase rather than supersede separation. He even rejects the making of statistics and registers because it would hold up the disintegration of Judaism (ibid.:105).

Humboldt rejects as circular reasoning the fear the Jews might after emancipation (*Gleichstellung*) push out (*verdrängen*) the Christians: emancipation *means* that it is politically irrelevant whether somebody who holds an office and does the job well is Jewish or not (*ibid.*:102). Humboldt puts great emphasis on the necessity to overcome popular prejudice. But since the state is 'not an educational but a legal institution', it merely has to create the conditions for the citizens to 'educate themselves' (*ibid.*:98) towards the overcoming of prejudice. The state ought to promote toleration amongst the different strands of Judaism to the effect that the majority of Jews would soon realize that they adhere not to a religion but to a ceremonial law only, and will turn towards the higher, Christian belief (*ibid.*:104).<sup>183</sup>

The Prussian emancipation decree of 1812 was a product of the short period of radical reform triggered by Prussia's defeat by Napoleon in 1807. For this specific historical moment, Prussian state officials unequivocally declared that the preservation of the Jewish group was not necessary or advantageous for the state (Arendt 1973:30;60).<sup>184</sup>

At the congress of Vienna, Austria, Prussia and Hanover failed to impose on the German Federation the comparatively liberal legislation that had been adopted in Austria in 1782, in Prussia in 1812 and in Hanover when it was part of the Napoleonic Kingdom of Westphalia (Hamburger 1969:7). The year 1815 meant for this reason, as Hamburger asserts, the reversal of a general trend towards Jewish emancipation (*ibid.*:8). In Wuerttemberg and in Baden the diets opposed government proposals towards improvements of the legal situation of the Jews, in the former case without, in the latter (under the leadership of the liberal Karl von Rotteck) with, success (*ibid.*:9).

Despite the general lack of development in their legal status, Jews made remarkable progress socially and economically. In Prussia in particular, they benefited from compulsory education to the effect that between the traditionally wealthy minute Jewish elite and the numerous Jewish poor, a middle class

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<sup>183</sup> Humboldt argued here in a tradition shared also by Kant, on whose philosophy Humboldt builds. Kant argued in *Conflict of the Faculties* (1798) that emancipation will necessitate prior evidence of moral and religious reform (Smith 1997:185), the 'purification' of belief for which he uses the very unfortunate metaphor, the 'euthanasia of Judaism'.

<sup>184</sup> Furthermore, at that time Prussia had lost its eastern provinces (i.e. most of the Jewish poor) so that emancipation in practice meant 'not much more than a general legal affirmation of the status quo' of privileged Jewry (*ibid.*).

developed that 'entered trade and crafts in growing numbers' (ibid.:10). This development created 'a definite contradiction between the social and economic status of a growing number of Jews and their legal situation' in the course of the first half of the nineteenth century (ibid.:11).<sup>185</sup> It was reflected by the fact that after 1848, the Liberals 'systematically espoused the cause of Jewish emancipation' (ibid.:14), in spite of 'the stubborn resistance of the German middle class to the emancipation of the Jews' in the less economically advanced regions.

After the Congress of Vienna, not only the spirit of reform lost its thrust, but also the eastern provinces were given back to Prussia, where the Jewish poor lived, and 'nobody but a few intellectuals who dreamed of the French Revolution and the Rights of Man ever thought of giving them the same status as their wealthy brethren – who certainly were the last to clamour for an equality by which they could only lose' (Arendt 1973:33). While the Prussian reformers had discarded the traditional insistence of the state on the preservation of the Jews as a distinct social group, the Prussian state after 1815 reasserted the traditional position, as when in 1823 Frederick William III prohibited 'the slightest renovations' of Jewish customs and rituals and ruled out anything 'which could further an amalgamation between the Jews and the other inhabitants' (quoted ibid.:32).<sup>186</sup>

In this period, most German liberals' attitude towards the 'Jewish question' was determined by three elements: they generally shared 'the enlightened-etatist view which held that the Jews must first pass through a "preparatory school" on the way to freedom' (Rürup 1969:79), as well as 'a specific enlightened-liberal aversion to Judaism' as an anachronistic manifestation of 'ignorance, fanaticism and poor taste' and of a refusal to develop and progress. Thirdly, liberals – including for example Karl von Rotteck – tended from this time to postulate 'a certain uniformity of thought and action for the new society' (ibid.:79f) in a way that had previously not been customary. While in the context of the

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<sup>185</sup> In Prussia except Poznan, the Jewish population managed from 1812 (despite regressive tendencies in state policy) to form a higher bourgeoisie, a strong middle class and a broad lower middle class (not, though, a numerous proletariat).

<sup>186</sup> In post-1815 Prussia the conversion of Jews to Christian faith should be rewarded with civil rights, while in reverse, Christians converting to Judaism were threatened with the loss of civil rights. The latter was perhaps the more important aspect (Clark 2001:70f). In addition, 'the

Enlightenment, de-Judaization had meant religious reform, participation in the general trend of making society 'industrious' and the commitment to 'universal reason', under the new conditions of advanced nation-state formation in the period after the French Revolution these concerns were complemented, and partly replaced, with a much more encompassing concern for culture. The urge towards cultural-national *assimilation* was an element of *nationalism* rather than of Enlightenment *universalism*.<sup>187</sup>

The 'state-cultural' element became quite central during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Karl von Rotteck wrote in 1828 that 'the Jew had to be de-Jewified',<sup>188</sup> (Leuschen-Seppel 1978:26). He argued in 1833 that the 'temporary restriction of the rights of the Israelites' was necessary 'because the state as an intimate association (inniger Verein) necessitates a certain homogeneity or amalgamation of attitudes and preferences (eine gewisse Gleichförmigkeit oder Verschmelzung der Gesinnungen und Neigungen), and the Jews can not have this actually social attitude towards us' unless they 'stop being Jews in the strong sense of the word'. Rotteck held that 'hostility (Feindseligkeit) or at least adversity (Scheu) against all other peoples' was intrinsic to Judaism (Rürup 1987:77). While Enlightenment liberalism was primarily concerned with *civic-political* assimilation (and also with reform towards universal 'reasonable religion'), nationalist liberalism shifted the emphasis on assimilation towards *national culture*.<sup>189</sup>

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emergence of a secular third option' was legally prevented: Jews were not allowed to leave their community without converting to the Christian faith (ibid.:71).

<sup>187</sup> Birnbaum and Katznelson assert against a 'nationalist current in Jewish historiography' which tends to equate emancipation with the 'end of the Jewish people' that 'there was no near-complete eradication of Jewish culture in the societies in which the Enlightenment and emancipation left their most striking marks', namely North America and France. 'Modernization' as such changed the meaning of, but did not extinguish Jewishness (Birnbaum/Katznelson 1995:18).

<sup>188</sup> Rotteck rejected Jewish emancipation with the argument their religion was 'völkerfeindlich' (apparently a blend of anti-social and anti-national) (quoted in Sterling 1969:81). The Jews lacked 'the freedom and true *Sittlichkeit*' to 'subject themselves voluntarily to the majority principle' (ibid.:85).

<sup>189</sup> Most Jews were ready to take part in the bourgeoisie's struggle for emancipation from aristocratic domination and in this process, to assimilate into the emerging bourgeois society, or rather the class that saw itself as the core of that society. However, the non-Jewish bourgeoisie was not unconditionally ready to welcome the support by a even less privileged group and to fight for their specific interests as well (Jersch-Wenzel 1974:365). An example is the statement by Friedrich Dahlmann (formulated in 1831): the 'faults of our civil society (die Gebrechen unserer bürgerlichen Gesellschaft) would not allow an act as 'politically daring' as the emancipation of the Jews (quoted in Sterling 1969:88). He feared emancipation could trigger

The 'insistence that the emancipated Jew should cease to be a Jew in any but a purely private capacity remained the liberal orthodoxy' throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Pulzer 1997:5). About the time-scale of how to get there, however, two positions continued to compete with each other. Rotteck – like most pre-48 liberals – argued for a postponement of emancipation until sufficient reform of Judaism and the Jews was completed, but also the Humboldtian position – then the minority position – was present, as formulated for example by another Baden deputy (also in 1833): the Israelites should 'be thrown into the masses of the Christian population so that they would be carried away by the torrent and, like a pebble wandering along a river bed, be rounded and made to fit into the existing order (dem Bestehenden sich einfuegen)' (quoted in Rürup 1987:80).

From around 1846, majority liberal thought shifted towards support for emancipation without conditions (Rürup 1987:89).<sup>190</sup> From the 1860s, finally, there was a liberal consensus that state legislation should not be concerned with the actual process of the social integration of the Jews, but merely abolish any obstacles that restricted the individual, and to allow society to take care of the rest.

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riots that could get out of hand. During the anti-Jewish riots leading up to 1848, liberal bourgeois tolerated or even encouraged violence against Jews.

Jewish liberals tended to endorse the emancipation-assimilation deal. In 1830, Gabriel Riesser expressed the old Enlightenment position thus: 'The state has the undeniable right to demand the fulfillment of general civic duties as a condition for granting civil rights; but there is no state in Germany in which the Jews would not be ready to accept these duties and burdens' (quoted in Pulzer 1997:7). Emil Lehmann, one of the founders of the Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund, went beyond Enlightenment-liberal demands when he spoke (in 1869) of assimilation as the 'reciprocal obligation' (Gegenleistung) due for emancipation, including for example the abandonment of Sabbath observance (ibid.).

<sup>190</sup> This was generally not based, however, on the acknowledgment of any 'civic betterment' that the Jews might have undergone in the meantime; typically it was claimed that 'the time' (not 'the Jews') was ripe now, and that liberty was the hallmark of the *Zeitgeist*.

### 1.3.6 ANTI-SEMITISM

The Viennese rabbi Adolf Jellinek predicted in 1866 that the antithesis 'Christians against Jews' was going to be replaced by that of 'Aryans against Semites', the 'new Jewish question' (Cahnmann 1965:677). The emergence of a movement that chose to refer to itself with the neologism 'anti-Semitic' around 1880 proved him right. The social and intellectual process that found expression in the new concept, however, reached back much farther.

The word 'Semitic' had been established as a collective word for the languages Hebrew, Phoenician, Arabic, Aramaic and Ethiopian by 18<sup>th</sup> century scholars (Bernal 1991:344).<sup>191</sup> The concept of a 'Semitic race' has been introduced by historians, philologists, and political commentators (in Germany) in the 1840s (Sterling 1969:126). An important proponent of the concept of a 'Semitic race' (modelled on the linguistic account) was Ernest Renan. Renan supported Jewish emancipation and was not 'consciously antisemitic' (Almog 1988:257). Nevertheless he gave academic credibility to notions typically held by anti-Semites such as that 'the Jewish nation' (although not the individual Jew) was responsible collectively for the death of Jesus (ibid.:263), or that Jesus might not have been Jewish after all given that Galilee was a 'racially mixed' province (ibid.:270). He asserted that language is founded in insurmountable racial difference and hierarchy (ibid.:266). However, he was prepared to allow some leeway for cultural dynamics and historical change: the Israelite 'who has become French, or even better, European' has thereby culturally transcended his lowly racial background (ibid.:267).<sup>192</sup>

The exact origin of the term 'anti-Semitic' is not known. The earliest known reference is an article in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des deutschen Judentums* (September 2, 1879) reporting the announcement of an 'Anti-Semitic journal' by

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<sup>191</sup> The term was of course taken from the catalogue of peoples in *Genesis 1:10* whose author seems to divide all peoples known (or relevant) to him into three groups named after the three sons of Noah, one of whom is called Shem (Nipperdey/Rürup 1972:130). For the historical linguists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century taking up this reference must have been an obvious choice because in this text language is one of the main determinants of 'a people'. The speakers of languages that modern scholarship refers to as 'Semitic' are however not identical with the peoples listed in *Genesis 1:10* as the descendants of Shem.

<sup>192</sup> In his celebrated speech on the concept of the nation (1882) Renan emphasized that politics ought not to be based on racial categories. Almog suggests that Renan's professing of individualist-liberal values were part of his public-political agenda but did not 'penetrate into

Wilhelm Marr.<sup>193</sup> At the end of the same month there were advertisements for the foundation of an 'Anti-Semitic League' which did however little more than propagate the word. The breakthrough of the term as a new political keyword occurred in the course of the year 1880. The new term was 'conveniently inaccurate' as it implied more than 'just' hatred of the Jews, but still left no doubts about the target (Volkov 1978:39). It also 'tended to load on the Jews ... the whole weight of "Asiatic barbarism"' (Halevi 1987:132). The proponents of 'anti-Semitism' claimed that 'Semites' (in particular, Jews as the most prominent and exemplary group) had 'always' been hated, although the new term was chosen to signal, and in the consciousness of, its modernity.<sup>194</sup> Those who coined the new word (and many contemporaries) seem to have felt that they 'invented' something radically new; however, the explicit reference to the notion of a 'Semitic race' was at most a shift in emphasis within a discourse significant parts of which had presupposed that notion for much longer (see below).

#### 1.3.6.1 Anti-Semitism, pro- and anti-modern

One of the most perplexing aspects of 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-Semitism is that hatred of Jews could express opposition to modern liberal society, nationalism and 'bourgeois revolution' as well as (nationalist, bourgeois, liberal) opposition to reaction and counter-revolution. Anti-Semitism originated historically from

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[the] deeper levels' of his scholarly thinking (ibid.:268), nor did it keep him from sharing anti-Semitic notions of the (modern) Jewish character (ibid.:271f).

<sup>193</sup> However, Marr had announced an 'Anti-Jewish journal' and started himself using the word 'anti-Semitic' in publications only from spring 1880. The journalist of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* seems to have learned the word from another source and adopted it for his reporting on Marr's publication (Nipperdey/Rürup 1972:138).

<sup>194</sup> This double character is clearly a 'modernist' feature of 'anti-Semitism'. The 'Janus-face' also resembles the case of the concept of the (modern) nation.

I follow Blaschke's (1997b:269) suggestion that the term 'anti-Judaism' should be reserved exclusively to that (early) medieval attitude that treats the Jews as objects of (princely or patrician) patronage and Christian mission, not in any way as 'an active factor in politics, economy and culture'. I use 'anti-Semitism' and 'Jew-hatred' – as far as the 'modern period' in the widest sense is concerned – more or less as synonyms because I find an overemphasis on a rupture around 1880 (when the word was coined) misleading. It gives undue credit to the anti-Semitic claim that the movement that referred to itself with that name was something new and different from e.g. the Jew-hatred of 1819 or 1848. In particular I reject the widespread idea that Jew-hatred that is articulated within the rhetoric of 'race' is substantially different from Jew-hatred that does not use that rhetoric, and, conversely, that Jew-hatred that makes references to (Christian) theology constitutes a discrete object in its own right. The overlap between both is so strong that such a conceptual distinction obscures rather than helps.



two antagonistic sources at the same time, and both sides of its twofold origin left their traces in all subsequent forms and manifestations of anti-Semitism.<sup>195</sup>

The short period of anti-feudal reform in Prussia between 1807 and 1815 gave birth to a form of anti-Semitism that expressed conservative aristocratic opposition to modernization. The Prussian conservative landlord Ludwig von der Marwitz argued in 1811 that the legal introduction of the free alienability of real estate made Prussia 'a modern Jew-state (ein neumodischer Judenstaat)' (Rogalla von Bieberstein 1992:113; Arendt 1973:31). The anti-Semitic German-nationalist radicals from the period of the anti-Napoleonic wars (Arndt, Fries) were anti-reform and anti-French.<sup>196</sup> The anti-Jewish and anti-French agitation of the 'Wartburgfest' (1817) included celebrating Luther as well as burning copies of the *Code Napoléon*. The anti-modernist anti-Semites adopted herewith an idea that had been first developed by the French Catholic reaction to the French Revolution claiming the Jews were 'useful instruments' for Illuminati and Jacobins who were carrying out a conspiracy against religion, monarchy, civil society and property<sup>197</sup> (Rogalla von Bieberstein 1992:107).<sup>198</sup>

Anti-modernist anti-Semitism evolved suddenly in Prussia and destroyed the generally friendly relations that had existed between aristocracy and Jews (especially the Berlin salon scene) but it decreased when the reform period ended with the Vienna Congress. *Conservative* anti-Semitism (mostly reduced to forms of 'mild discrimination') continued to exist next to *liberal*, anti-aristocratic, pro-modernization anti-Semitism. In a Prussian anti-feudal pamphlet from 1807 the

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<sup>195</sup> The validity of any interpretation of modern anti-Semitism must be measured against how it manages to take account of this peculiar phenomenon. It is crucial in this context not to reduce the historiography of 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-Semitism to a succession of distinct phenomena but to appreciate the branching out of an increasing number of differential and contradictory, even antagonistic, appearances.

<sup>196</sup> Additionally, they were also anti-Hegelian: they considered Hegel's philosophy an instance of 'French-Jewish foreign domination' (Claussen 1994a:127).

<sup>197</sup> From a counter-revolutionary publication from 1795

<sup>198</sup> Those who accepted this theory could point to Napoleon's efforts to instrumentalize Masonic infrastructure for his own purposes, while at the same time promoting Jewish emancipation in the occupied territories. In German anti-French literature of the same period the coincidence of both – despite the fact that most Lodges did not admit Jews – was transformed into the notion that Masons and Jews together were instances of the French occupation (ibid.:108). (Not unlike 'Jew', the concepts 'Free-mason' and 'Illuminati' were often used at the time in a loose and metaphorical sense [ibid.:115].) Christian clerics interpreted Napoleon's initiative for a 'Big Sanhedrin' in 1806 as further evidence of this conspiracy, identifying the Napoleonic Sanhedrin with the Jewish institution of the same name in Jerusalem that allegedly had been responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.

Jews were claimed to form a symbiosis with the nobility (Rogalla von Bieberstein 1992:110).<sup>199</sup>

Populist anti-Semitism in the period before 1848 was rooted in the anti-capitalist moral sentiments of the petty bourgeoisie that tended to be anti-modernist and 'related in many ways to the conservative world-view' (Sterling 1969:115). Nevertheless, they were articulated as a petty bourgeois form of liberalism. From the perspective of artisans and other traditional 'middle class' groups, the ascendancy of the Jews from the very lowest to fairly comfortable positions contrasted with their own fears of decline. It produced a rhetoric that could see 'the puffing locomotive' as a work of demonic Jews (ibid.:117).<sup>200</sup>

A good example of this 'liberal' form of anti-Semitism is a pamphlet distributed in Bavaria in May 1819 by a lawyer, Thomas August Scheuring, who argued that Jews considered themselves only temporarily to be living in diaspora until 'their great Messiah' would lead them to Palestine. Therefore,

the Jews [could] never fully amalgamate with the indigenous, national people and become a part of that harmonious whole that we call a bourgeois society (Rohrbacher 1999:38).<sup>201</sup>

This pamphlet was debated in the local press and village pubs immediately before the 'Hep Hep riots' in Wuerzburg in August 1819. Local debates and 'Hep Hep' riots coincided with the Bavarian diet's discussing the emancipation of the Jews (ibid.:39). The riots were a political protest against emancipation and invoked – amongst other arguments – the notion that the Jews were unable to be part of bourgeois society.<sup>202</sup> Another example for liberal opposition to Jewish

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<sup>199</sup> This line of anti-feudal, pro-bourgeois (and in this sense, *quasi* liberal) anti-Semitism exploited similarities of some aristocratic and Jewish values (social conservatism, the emphasis on the importance of family links, the a-national, inter-European orientation). Arendt asserts that the view held by early liberals in Prussia and France that aristocracy and (privileged) Jews constituted an interested alliance against the rising bourgeoisie was not totally implausible at the time (Arendt 1973:20). Furthermore, there have been specific periods in history (for example in Poland before 1795) when such an alliance actually existed; cp. Halevi 1987).

<sup>200</sup> There seems to be some congruence, and possibly historical relationship, between this ambivalence of pre-1848 German liberalism (mostly a small-town phenomenon anyway) and traditional petty bourgeois resistance to modernizing changes (such as the introduction of new working practices) that in turn seems to have been implicated as early as in the heretical movements of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries that were predominantly supported by artisans (Kofler 1979).

<sup>201</sup> '... die Juden mit den eingebornen, nationalen Menschen nie innigst verschmelzen, und ein Theil jenes harmonischen Ganzen werden [können], den wir einen buergerlichen Verein nennen'.

<sup>202</sup> The expression 'Hep Hep' might refer to the slogan 'Hierosolyma est perdita' (Jerusalem is doomed) from the Crusades against the Jews in the Rhineland in 1097. Claussen (1994a:159)

emancipation as imposed by the Enlightened-absolutist state is a motion that the liberal politician Karl von Rotteck brought into the Baden diet. In Baden Jews enjoyed equal state citizenship (*Staatsbuergerrechte*) since 1807 but not communal citizenship (*Gemeindebuergerrecht*). When the reform government abolished the distinction between ‘citizen of a town’ (*Ortsbuerger*) and ‘protected citizen’ (*Schutzbuerger*) in 1831, the Jews were exempted from this due to Rotteck’s motion. After that, Jews were the only group who could be *Schutzbuerger* in Baden towns – their *relative* discrimination had actually increased (*ibid.*).<sup>203</sup>

Anti-Semitism changed to the extent that people got used to ‘demons’ such as locomotives, liberalism and the capitalist mode of production. The period between 1848 and 1871 saw the majority of the landed aristocracy as well as the more wealthy petty bourgeoisie join the dynamic, capitalist sections of society and increasingly adopt the capitalist methods that they had previously condemned as ‘Jewish’. This condemnation was transformed in the process if not given up (Sterling 1969:135): capitalism and liberalism were in their eyes – so to speak – ‘baptized’ to the effect that only their destructive, radical, incompatible or unpleasant sides continued to be referred to as ‘Jewish’ (*ibid.*:136).

*Modern anti-Semitism* in the more narrow sense of the word – the ‘anti-Semitism of the industrial age’ (Rosenberg 1967:91) – was an even less

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suggests that the perpetrators of the pogroms more likely thought of the sounds with which people call animals. In a more general sense the socio-economic background of the situation was that the ending of the Napoleonic ‘Continental System’ resulted in cheap English commodities (especially textiles) entering the continental European market. In particular in South Germany this had severely damaging effects on local production and distribution. The imported products seem to have been sold mainly by Jewish traders, which must have added to the anti-Jewish riots in 1819. The so called ‘Hep Hep riots’ that began in Würzburg (Bavaria) paralleled discussions on Jewish emancipation in the Bavarian diet while at the same time Christian traders tried to enforce restrictions on Jewish competition (Claussen 1987:73). These issues were fiercely discussed also at the universities and within the fraternities.

Nevertheless, Würzburg (like other places where anti-Jewish riots occurred) was then not a place of particularly extreme poverty (Rohrbacher 1999:35). While it is evident that the (journalistic and state-official) *discourse* about the riots consistently claimed that the urban and rural poor suffered from and took revenge for Jewish usury (*ibid.*:43), it seems not clear that the rioters themselves were actually debtors and the victims their creditors (*ibid.*:36).

<sup>203</sup> In other words, a social divide between full citizens and protected subjects had turned into a divide between Christian citizens and Jewish non-citizens (Rürup 1987:90).

Rohrbacher writes that the anti-Jewish riots in 1848/9 happened in places that were not main places of the revolution (Rohrbacher 1999:31). James Harris demonstrated the existence of a ‘broad-based, popular and remarkably well-organized’ political movement that prevented Jewish

homogeneous phenomenon than that of the reform and reaction periods following the French Revolution: next to the (now smaller) number of those who still hated the Jews for standing in the way of progress and the (still large) number of those (mainly conservative and clerical forces) who hated them for ushering in progress at all<sup>204</sup> there were those anti-Semites 'who were, in effect, a disappointed second generation of the National Liberal bourgeoisie' (Pulzer 1988:xxi), a 'bourgeois movement against the principles of bourgeois society' (Jochmann 1988:52). Although they also inherited some of the petty-bourgeois, pre-1848 (artisanal) liberalism, their rejection of capitalist modernity was much more selective. Only rather marginal figures amongst the National-Liberal *Bildungsbuerger* would completely reject industrial society; but still, many saw themselves disappointed when they realized that the result of the process they had supported was quite different from what they had expected it to be: a modern state based on and a promoter of capitalist economic development. They tended to blame what they would see as the 'exaggerations' of its modern capitalist elements on the influence of the 'Jewish spirit', rather than on the specific historical dynamic of which their own involvement had been a part.

Many other anti-Semites came from 'the disappointed democratic camp' such as Richard Wagner, Wilhelm Marr and Bruno Bauer (Claussen 1994a:144). Their anti-Semitism results from disappointment with either the failure, or the unwanted effects of the partial successes of the left-liberal, democratic movement, combined with their refusal to join the only credible inheritor of 1848 radicalism, Social Democracy.

A further differentiation has to be made between those who despised liberal capitalism when it worked well and those who – after the economic crisis of 1873 – despised it only as long as it did not (Pulzer 1988:33). Respectively, there is a sliding scale of anti-Semites who would (with similar rhetoric) intend to go back to whatever they think things had been like in pre-capitalist society – *reaction* – and those who would intend to make the existing system work better – *reform*.

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emancipation in Bavaria in 1849 and that was not directly related to any form of economic crisis (quoted in van Rahden 1996:17f).

<sup>204</sup> An example: Smith and Clark describe an influential populist writer in Baden in the 1890s who presented rural Jews as 'exemplary for their devotion, for their work, and for their

Perhaps the only element that constitutes a real novelty in the second half of the 1870s was the emergence of anti-Semitism as a 'world-view' (Rürup 1987:115). This aspect of anti-Semitism was more than an anti-Jewish program but offered 'the travesty of a theory of society', more specifically of 'bourgeois society in crisis' (ibid.). As a 'world-view', anti-Semitism promised that the destruction of the 'evil' principle of *Judentum* would mean the victory of a 'good' principle, while all earlier forms of anti-Semitism also knew of other evils that were not supposed to be automatically resolved together with the 'Jewish question'.<sup>205</sup> However, this particular form of anti-Semitism only gained some currency during and since the 1890s<sup>206</sup> and falls therefore outside the demarcations of the present discussion.

The Jew-hatred of peasants for example was probably far from 'weltanschaulich'. The peasants might have hated 'their' Jewish middlemen but still had an awareness that they belonged to the same rural world within which they depended on each other: 'resentment or no resentment', business had to be done (Massing 1949:75). The urban middle classes were very differently positioned. 'Insecurity and instability were the dominant notes of their existence', or at least of their consciousness. The lower middle class youth of Christian and Jewish background were directly competing for social advancement; peasants and village Jews were objectively bound up together and on the decline together.<sup>207</sup>

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abstinence from drink' while his 'anti-Semitic diatribes' were directed against city-Jews as well as 'other city people: Old Catholics, Freemasons, Protestant professors' (Smith/Clark 2001:12).

<sup>205</sup> Rürup writes that anti-Semitism as a world-view had the function 'to allow for a criticism of the existing conditions without questioning their real foundations; for attacking the "spirit" of capitalism, banking and stock-jobbing, but not the mode of production itself; for threatening persons but not institutions; for being radically critical of the defects of the system without suggesting revolutionary consequences' (ibid.:116). This is not, however, an exclusive characteristic of what I would call 'weltanschaulicher' anti-Semitism.

'Post-liberal mass-based' anti-Semitism rejected using anti-Semitism for merely tactical purposes and made it 'the goal and content of its struggle' (ibid.), having accepted 'the positivist attitudes to law and religion and the notion of mass participation in politics' and also being 'more violent, more prophetic, more apocalyptic', no more respectful of Junkers and cardinals than it is of Jews and Liberals', being 'atheist without being rationalist' (Pulzer 1988:55).

<sup>206</sup> Much more, of course, after that rupture of ruptures, WWI.

<sup>207</sup> 'The interests of petty bourgeois high school and university graduates, who coveted jobs and positions as teachers, judges, lawyers, journalists, physicians, engineers, administrators and politicians, were at variance with the old-fashioned notion that religious conversion and political reliability, honesty, and public-mindedness established civil equality' (ibid.:76). The specific form of anti-Semitism of the 'small people' that was based in 'material interest, social envy and the craving for social status' and the belief in 'the identity and moral inferiority of Jewry, usury and the rule of capital' became 'something much more encompassing', namely the world-view of

The main tendency of anti-Semitism after 1848 reflects the partial convergence of the main ideological positions, liberalism and conservatism. Within this framework, elements of the (reactionary) discourse that finds the Jews *too modern* can be found in combination with elements of the (modernization and emancipation) discourse that finds the Jews *too un-modern*. The majority of anti-Semitic pamphlet literature (that seems mostly to have been written by people from petty bourgeois background) in the nineteenth century can be located somewhere between the anti-modern tendency and that of those who were disappointed by failed or insufficient modernization. It remains to be seen how the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* (a manifestation of the *bildungsbuergerliche* discourse) can be located on this scale.

#### 1.3.6.2 The 'racial' element of anti-Semitism

Blaschke (1997b) argues that the familiar typological distinction between (racial) 'anti-Semitism' and (not racial) 'Jew-hatred', 'anti-Judaism' or 'traditional anti-Semitism' tends to obscure and play down the latter.<sup>208</sup> The suspicion that even a converted Jew 'always remains a Jew' – not a pervasive but neither an unusual element of 'traditional anti-Judaism' – has always been implicitly racial whether or not *the word* 'race' is actually used (ibid.:76).<sup>209</sup> The notion of an unchangeable Jewish character was for example already present in some of Luther's writings: they were 'racist' *avant la lettre*.<sup>210</sup>

Sartre shows that at the basis of race-thinking, long before any reference to alleged 'biology' comes into play, is the notion that social *groups* relate to each other the same way *individuals* in society do. The notion that every social group

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modern anti-Semitism, 'only indirectly' when 'politicians, agitators and ideological fanatics' mirrored back to them their sentiments in systematic form seizing the opportunity given by circumstance (Rosenberg 1967:97).

<sup>208</sup> He suggests in its place distinguishing between 'openly confessing' racial anti-Semitism ('Bekennntnisantisemitismus') and consensual, habitual anti-Semitism ('gebundener Antisemitismus'). The latter does not typically adopt the rhetoric of 'race' but is ever more fundamental: it is the 'deep structure' ('Tiefenschicht') of anti-Semitism (ibid.:71) and insofar deserves not less, but rather more attention than the former.

<sup>209</sup> Whenever the concept was available at all, there has been a range of views within the framework of Christian theology on whether religious difference is a symptom of racial difference, or race a product of religion (or of a divine master plan) (ibid.). Either way, *both* religion and race mattered and were seen as interrelated.

<sup>210</sup> Caricatures of Jews that constructed 'typical' physical characteristics of Jews, i.e. a 'racial type', became common as early as in the second half of the seventeenth century (Hilberg 1985:17).

has a 'collective will' accommodates the idealistic view that social processes are caused by 'wills' (intrigues, cabals, perfidy, courage and virtue) with the contradictory experience that one's *individual* will does not always, and not even typically, get its way. If a social group is supposed to 'have a will', it must be thought of as a quasi- *personality*, modelled on the bourgeois individual. For the anti-Semite, the Jewishness that makes the Jews Jews is a substance or essence 'analogous to phlogiston' (Sartre 1965:37), the 'substance' that in the nineteenth century was thought to constitute the 'matter' of electricity.<sup>211</sup> The developed, allegedly 'biological' concept of 'race' is only a secondary 'slender scientific coating' of this much older and more fundamental – namely societal – conviction (ibid.:38).<sup>212</sup>

The word 'Jews', and also the phrase 'the Jewish people' referred until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to a group constituted by its religion as well as its status outside (although not independent from) *ständische* society (Nipperdey/ Rürup 1972:131). To the extent that within the context of that society social position was static and *quasi*-inherited anyway, a specific notion of inherited, *quasi*-racial characteristics was unnecessary and hardly existed.<sup>213</sup> From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, this changed. In the context of 'Protestant theology of the Enlightenment, idealism and liberalism' (ibid.) those elements of Christianity that the former aimed to challenge tended to be identified as the anachronistic manifestations of a 'spirit of Judaism', a spiritual force that needed to be restricted to its proper realm, the Jewish sub-culture. The same 'spirit of

<sup>211</sup> This was before it was discovered that electricity is not matter but merely difference of charge, or a relation between antagonistic poles – the analogy is striking. Sartre alludes here to Marx's concept of 'commodity fetishism'; he writes that the bourgeois 'behave toward social facts' like followers of fetishistic religions 'who endow the wind and the sun with little souls. Intrigues, cabals, the perfidy of one man, the courage and virtue of another – that is what determines the course of their business, that is what determines [in their thinking] the course of the world.' (ibid.). As Sartre implies, intrigues, cabals, etc. might indeed to some extent determine the immediate course of affairs within the bourgeoisie, but the extrapolation of this experience to the course of *society as a whole* is a fetishistic delusion.

<sup>212</sup> The etymology of 'race' is unclear; on the various theories see Sommer (1984:137f). Apart from occasional use of the word 'razza' etc. from the 13<sup>th</sup> century (in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and French), 'race' is increasingly used only from the 16<sup>th</sup> century (from then also in English) in the meaning of (royal or aristocratic) family or lineage (ibid.). The aspect of superior quality is central to the concept: it could also refer to groups of the same (high) social status that were not related by kinship. The use of the word for human beings and for animals (especially horses) seems to have developed in parallel (ibid.:141). It has not, however, been used in an anthropological sense before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>213</sup> The probably only exception is Spain where a specific historical constellation created the conditions for a specific and, as it were, more modern, i.e. more explicitly racial discourse.

Judaism' that allegedly corrupted and falsified Christian *religion* subsequently could in a similar vein also be held responsible for the wrongs of Christian *society*. In this process, Judaism was transformed from a theological to a secular, anthropological-historical category.<sup>214</sup> While in the pre-modern context, religion could be thought of as constituting a social-cultural-ethnic group (a 'nation' in the rather vague, pre-modern meaning of the term<sup>215</sup>), for the historical-anthropological thinking predominant in the nineteenth century, religion could not be more than the epi-phenomenon of an underlying national, cultural/historical substance. This substance is what finally is called – by some, not by everybody in the first place – 'race'.<sup>216</sup>

As is the case in the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*, the anti-Semitic discourse often reflects on the notion that there must be a reason why the Jews have been objects of hate in so many instances and over such a long time. Anti-Semites are very keen to demonstrate the antiquity of Jew-hatred: if not only Goethe and Napoleon but even 'the Romans' hated the Jews, it cannot be completely wrong. Anti-Semitism tends to suggest a specific construction of a history of animosities against Jews. The wider the temporal framework for such a construction, i.e. the more trans-historical Jew-hatred is claimed to be, the more trans-historical must be the supposedly self-identical object of that 'eternal' hate, the Jews.<sup>217</sup> This process produces inevitably a 'racial' concept.<sup>218</sup> Those who argue in such a mode identify, or at least ally, themselves with the long line of perpetrators of what they understand are anti-Semitic acts. Their racism is 'the attempt of the persecutors and discriminators to explain their own practice of persecution to themselves' in a way that necessarily obscures the actual history of those

<sup>214</sup> Schwarzschild writes that there has been a series of endeavors to 'aryanize' Christianity, including Hegel's essay from 1795, 'Athens and Judea – Should Judea be the Teuton's Fatherland?', his later identification of Jesus with Socrates, and comments by Goethe, Dühring and Chamberlain (Schwarzschild 1986:77).

<sup>215</sup> In the pre-modern context, a statement such as that the Jews are a nation constituted by their religion, is a meaningful statement, in the modern context it is not.

<sup>216</sup> For example, Gutzkow wrote in a novel from 1835: 'character' is based on 'tribal psychology (Stammespsychologie) and probably has a corporeal basis'. Gutzkow also argued for 'racial purity (Racenreinheit)' (Sterling 1969:100f).

<sup>217</sup> For an account of Jewish history that consistently avoids the notion of a Jewish 'sameness' over thousands of years and several continents see Halevi (1987).

<sup>218</sup> Again: whether the word 'race' is used or not, is of only secondary importance.



practices (Reemtsma 1992:303; cp. also Graetz 1965: 47; Bamberger 1965:161f).<sup>219</sup>

Modern 'race-thinking' – gradually evolving into the 'world-view' of 'racism' as it can be found in the late nineteenth century – has most prominently been shaped by three different historical developments and the discourses that accompanied them, reinforcing and influencing each other in various ways: the Spanish *reconquista* and Catholic reaction, European colonialism and the struggle between old and new nobility (feeding into that between nobility and 'third estate') in 18<sup>th</sup> century France.

*In the context of the Spanish Inquisition*, the (formerly Jewish) *conversos*<sup>220</sup> were suspected of not sincerely having adopted Christian belief because those who *forced* them to convert *knew* that the conversion had been by force (Reemtsma 1992:305). The process that led to the formulation of probably the earliest form of racial theory (the Spanish notion of the 'limpieza de sangre')<sup>221</sup> in this context was as follows:

1. it was believed that the presence of Jews was 'a problem';
2. this problem was chosen to be solved by enforced expulsion of most Jews and enforced conversion of a smaller number;
3. there was a feeling that 'the problem' was not really solved, so that persecution and discrimination continued. Furthermore, there was a form of awareness that the brutality of the trial to resolve 'the problem' must have reinforced the (alleged) hostility of the Jews;
4. the continued existence of 'the problem' and of persecution needed an explanation that would legitimize the continued practice of persecution and suspicion without questioning the adequacy of the initial trial to resolve the

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<sup>219</sup> The concept of race is also implicit in the uneven logic of the emancipation bargain: if toleration led to the Jews becoming assimilated and civilized, this was evidence of the validity of the idea that emancipation leads to assimilation. If it did not, this was evidence of the un-assimilable nature, or at least the (tendentially eternal) 'immaturity' of the Jews. The concept of an inferior 'race' (whether the *word* is actually used or not) functions here, too, as a way of explaining the failure of the emancipation doctrine. Rather than admitting that the doctrine does not work, it is argued that the stubborn Jews are beings outside the doctrine's range of validity: they are not human, assimilable beings, capable of fitting, or being fitted, into bourgeois society.

<sup>220</sup> The same seems to be true of the (formerly Muslim) *moriscos*.

<sup>221</sup> 'Limpieza de sangre', purity of blood, seems to have been first demanded in 1414 by the University of Salamanca from its students; the concept developed in the context of and in interrelation with those of the purity of religious doctrine – a specific understanding of 'pure' Catholicism – and the identification of the Spanish nation as its defender (Schilling 1991:212).

Post-*reconquista* Spanish theologians did not challenge the Catholic doctrine that all human beings descended from Adam but argued that having fallen from the belief in Christ has irredeemably corrupted the blood of those who only recently (re-)converted to Christianity (Poliakov 1974:12f).

'problem' and without admitting the feeling that the 'resolution' actually reinforced, if not created, 'the problem'. This explanation was the concept of 'race'.<sup>222</sup>

At the time of the formulation of the racial theory the initial motivation of the practice of persecution might have become either irrelevant, or insufficient for legitimizing its continuation: 'the mental traces of a centuries long *practice* live longer than the *considerations* which led to that practice in the first place' (ibid.:315).<sup>223</sup>

In the colonial context,<sup>224</sup> an older tradition of European Christian 'ethnocentrism' and the Renaissance ethnographic discourse on various 'exotic' peoples that European explorers met was transformed into the modern concept of 'race' when the conditions of slavery of 'blacks' (that became more exclusively harsh in the course of the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century) needed explanation and legitimization (Smaje 2000:140ff). The concept of 'race'<sup>225</sup> referred in the colonial context to the lower level of productivity prevalent in the subjected colonial (or imported slave-) population, a socio-economic characteristic that was

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid.: 314; Reemtsma points to Poliakov who argued that the Inquisition consciously referred to the hate that persecution must have created as the reason for continued and preventative persecution.

It is in this context that for the first time the notion of a 'Jewish race' emerged. It is important to note that the exclusion and persecution of *conversos* and *moriscos* was in the first place a struggle about the composition of the ruling elite. Although 'Jewish race' clearly implied inferiority (at least that of holding the wrong belief), this 'race' was still construed as a faction within the elite, i.e. was connected to the sense that the word was used before the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (see above).

<sup>223</sup> The history of persecution and murder, and their multifarious reasons and motivations, is obscured and petrified not only by the notion of 'races' (some obnoxious and persecuted, others superior and persecutors) but also by the concept of 'racism' and the attempts at 'fighting racism': 'racism' can only be fought by 'making impossible the practices of discrimination and persecution' and breaking up their continuities. 'Racism', however, is not one of the *reasons* of 'racist practices' but merely an aspect of the specific *forms* they take. 'Fighting racism' is therefore at best a very imprecise word for what needs to be done: taken literally, it means 'fighting the ways the perpetrators explain their own practices to themselves'. Reemtsma argues that the examination of *specific* histories of persecution is relevant, not, however, 'lyrical thoughts about "the problem of the other"' (Reemtsma 1992:320). He suggests that the concept of 'racism' may better be given up since it leads to lumping together very different histories of persecution. Langmuir argues similarly: 'The Aryan myth was *their* (false) rationalization of their hostility, but since we do not believe that biological differences were the cause of their hostility, "racism" cannot be *our* explanation of the myth of their hostility' (Langmuir 1987:88).

<sup>224</sup> Different demographic and socio-economic relations in different colonies produced of course also different concepts of 'race' that cannot be mapped out here. In this section I refer only to the case of the Anglo-American colonies.

<sup>225</sup> On the connections between the emergence of the concept of 'race', early colonialism and the transformations in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe – particularly Spain and England – see Wood (1995); Lewis (1995); Goldner (1997, 1999); Smaje (2000).

hypostatized into a physical one (Scheit 1999:559).<sup>226</sup> The most momentous development was in this context the 'invention of the white race' (Allen 1994) in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Clear concepts of 'a white race' and 'a black race' need to be distinguished from the more diffuse elements of racialization and race-thinking that can be found in the colonial context from its beginnings (to the extent that 'race' was a regular part of the vocabulary of the most 'advanced' European elites since the 16<sup>th</sup> century). The status of African-American laborers was until 1660 'essentially the same as that of European-American bond-laborers, namely limited-term bond-servitude' (Allen 1994:3).<sup>227</sup> In the framework of the triangular trade, however, African slaves turned out to be much cheaper than European servants,<sup>228</sup> and their servitude could (for practical-material as well as cultural-ideological reasons) more easily be extended to life long, and then hereditary, slavery (Tompsett 2000:28).<sup>229</sup> This outcome set them

<sup>226</sup> In the beginnings of this specific discourse in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the different 'races' of slaves were shorthands for different price: the main racial characteristics that Europeans bothered to record were related to a prospective slave's use value for specific labours. Although being of 'black' (or otherwise 'coloured') 'race' implied primarily being 'predetermined' to be a slave, the concept is not implied in the institution of slavery as such: no slave economy before the American plantation system seems to have developed a 'racialized' concept of the people who would be slaves simply because there was *de facto* no such predetermination: whoever would become a slave depended on *fortune de guerre* (Scheit 1999:562f).

Skin colour and similar (otherwise irrelevant) features were in the first place mere ('arbitrary' in the linguistic sense) signifiers (ibid.:566). The speculative reversal that made skin colour from a signifier to the supposed *cause* of someone's 'racial make-up' came later. On the shift from the 'legal' to a 'biological' concept of race see especially Guillaumin (1995:37-49).

<sup>227</sup> The system of indentured servitude in the colonies 'was taken from the cities of Europe, where apprentices agreed to work for their master for seven years before being admitted to the master's trade' (Tompsett 2000:32). The system 'deteriorated' in the colonial setting where 'none of the social forces which kept abuse of the system in check' existed and 'paved the way for slavery'. In the 1620s, about 50 000 indentured servants were shipped to the American colonies (ibid.:38).

<sup>228</sup> Skin colour came to be significant as a mark denoting firstly, 'a slave from Africa' as opposed to a slave from Europe, then, when slaves stopped being recruited in Europe, just 'slave' (Guillaumin 1995:138). Subsequently, what had been simply a *mark* of a social relation – slavery – now came to be seen as the origin and legitimization, or even the *cause* of that social relation (ibid.:142).

Allen (looking at the different development of racialization in the English colonies on the Caribbean islands and on the American continent) argues that in both cases, the slaveholders were far outnumbered by their slaves and needed a *middle-stratum* to keep the considerable potential for resistance in check. In the case of the islands, this function was taken by a 'mulatto'-stratum, on the mainland by what came to be construed as a 'white' propertyless class.

The 'socio-economic' argument that the concept of the 'black race' originated from plantation slavery (Williams 1944) does not rule out that there has been some kind of 'anti-black prejudice' beforehand that *went into* the making of the modern concept of 'race'. However, the former needs to be distinguished from the latter.

<sup>229</sup> First all *non-Christians* were turned into life long slaves, then all servants who were not *born* as Christians (ibid.:39). After the slave trade (and then also slavery) had been abolished, the concept of the 'white race' in the American context became more complex especially due to large scale immigration of Europeans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

so fundamentally apart from everybody else that 'race' became a plausible denotation of this group of the workforce.

*In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century*, members of the high aristocracy in *France* developed a theory of history – most famously formulated by Boulainvilliers (1727) – that tried to explain and legitimize the current class structure of France with reference to the concept of 'race': the privileges of the high aristocracy were said to be the result of the conquest of a Gaulish race by a Frankish race (Conze 1984:157; Poliakov 1974). Not unlike in the Spanish case two centuries earlier, a ruling elite of old lineage defended itself against successful boundary-crossers from less noble lineage with reference to the concept of 'race'.<sup>230</sup> In the period preceding the French Revolution, this notion was increasingly invoked against the claims of the 'Third Estate' but back-fired devastatingly in the revolution when it became an argument *against* the high nobility (Arendt 1973:162f).<sup>231</sup> The idea of a superior Germanic race was then used with an anti-nationalist, reactionary intention and in the hope to rally aristocratic solidarity on a European level.

Although the political use of the concept had been a French aristocratic invention, the 'Germanic race' was subsequently more successfully invoked in Prussia in the context of the anti-French wars of 'liberation'. Here, the concept functioned in two overlapping but distinct ways: as a means to unite a not (yet) national population against French domination, and to create a national society in which the aristocracy (some of whom had been suspiciously fond of French language and culture) would cease to be the exclusively ruling class. In Prussia, thus, race-thinking first developed not against but *within* the discourse of nationalism (such as in Arndt), independent from a nobility that was closely involved with the state (ibid.:166).<sup>232</sup> It is in this specific historical context only that 'racial' ethnic-cultural nationalism stood *in opposition* to more traditional

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<sup>230</sup> The Spanish high aristocracy held a similar myth: they considered themselves descendants of the Visigoths who conquered Spain in the fifth century (Poliakov 1974:13).

<sup>231</sup> Cp. Sieyès in 'What is the Third Estate': 'Why should [the Third Estate] not relegate to the forests of Franconia all those families which persist in the foolhardy pretence of being descended from the race of the conquerors and of having succeeded to the rights of conquest?' (quoted in Poliakov 1974:28).

<sup>232</sup> Arendt suggests that nationalism reinforced by race-thinking developed due to the protracted period within which the formation of a unified German nation-state failed to occur: it is a form of 'frustrated nationalism' (ibid.).

forms of state-nationalism, the 'patriotism' that translates as loyalty to a *Vaterland* and a *Landesvater*.

Most forms of 'race-thinking' assume the existence of a multiplicity of races that usually, but not necessarily, are ranked in a strict hierarchy of their value. In such contexts, 'the Jews' are one race amongst others and often rank somewhere in the middle ground between 'Aryans' (top) and 'the Africans' or 'the Chinese' (bottom).<sup>233</sup> It is important therefore to distinguish from a more general notion of 'racist anti-Semitism' a more specific one that Sokel (1991) suggested calling 'ontological antisemitism': the 'Jewish essence' is unchangeable and transhistorical like in the concept of race, but based on a Manichaeian, dualistic idea of good and evil, light and darkness, with Judaism/Jewry/the Jews being the evil element. This concept operates with moral, universal, sometimes cosmological claims and in a metaphysical rather than (or in combination with) a 'biological inheritance' rhetoric and seems to be indebted to the older theological tradition of anti-Semitism. Sokel quotes Richard Wagner, Gustav Raabe, Arthur Schopenhauer and Eugen Dühring as representatives of 'ontological anti-Semitism'. The 'ontological-dualistic' element of modern anti-Semitism can be articulated with or without use of the rhetoric of 'race', while in turn 'race' does not necessarily imply ontological dualism. The more systematically violent forms of anti-Semitism tend to be those that show the element of 'ontological dualism'. The Manichaeian 'good vs. evil' principle seems to imply an imperative for particularly extreme action (such as extermination), while the concept of 'race' *as such* does not.<sup>234</sup>

#### 1.3.6.3 The economic discourse on the Jews

Clerical reaction and conservatism in the aftermath of the French Revolution opposed a cluster of historically related phenomena that are usually summed up under umbrella terms such as 'modernity', 'modernisation' or 'modern society' including liberalism, individualism and the capitalist mode of production. They also opposed most forms of socialism – except, however, when socialist notions

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<sup>233</sup> Ernest Renan would be an example.

<sup>234</sup> The argument that 'race' as such does not in itself imply an imperative for action has been developed by Hage (1998).

of collectivism or 'community' seemed to offer themselves as an ally against liberalism and individualism and were themselves articulated in backward-looking terms and imagery.<sup>235</sup>

To a significant extent, clerical reaction and conservatism were anti-Semitic<sup>236</sup>, in the sense that they held 'the Jews' responsible for the modern phenomena that they opposed (Blaschke 1997a:116).<sup>237</sup> In particular Catholic economic thought as it was cultivated in the nineteenth century in the context of clerical-populist Catholic reaction<sup>238</sup> painted egotism, greed and materialism as Jewish and established the distinction between a 'good' and a 'bad' economy: Jewish economy means exploitation that is not based on productive labour, its wealth stems from gambling and speculation; Christian economy is based on honest labour and the just use of (justly acquired or inherited) property (ibid.:122). Non-bourgeois Catholics tended to maintain a 'theological' work ethic that saw labour as just punishment for 'the Fall' that nobody should be allowed to escape (ibid.:124).<sup>239</sup> The gist of the idea is epitomized in a formulation from a text from 1880: 'The factories must become monasteries again' (ibid.:142).<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> The idea of communism as articulated by Marx – pivoted as it is on the dialectical notion of the 'social individual' – is of course a modern (as it were, 'post-liberal', and more specifically, 'post-Hegelian') phenomenon while 'primitive' notions of communism – that since the 19<sup>th</sup> century tend to be absorbed by anti-individualist, anti-liberal reaction – have existed throughout the history of Christianity on the fringes of, or outside the Church as an organization, but within the framework of Christian theology (cp. Kofler 1979); their points of reference are the Christian notions of (cosmological and metaphysical) 'natural right' and universal 'human' equality (that are contradicted by the fetishism and obscurantism characteristic of any religion, as well as the more or less authoritarian character of their specific organizational forms).

<sup>236</sup> To my knowledge it has never been established by any historian whether conservatives on the whole have been (or are) more prone to endorsing anti-Semitism (on grounds of reinforcing Christian theology), or opposing it (on grounds of defending religion). I would assume that most conservatives have been (or are) so much ambivalent about this that this question is unanswerable.

<sup>237</sup> This idea had two elements that would typically, but not necessarily appear together: the Jews are *historically* responsible for having caused, and they are *of the same essence* (wesensgleich) with liberalism, individualism and capitalism.

<sup>238</sup> This was not the case, incidentally, within the (comparatively marginal) bourgeois strand of 19<sup>th</sup> century Catholicism. As the parallel existence of bourgeois Catholicism proves, 19<sup>th</sup> century Catholicism did not *have* to be anti-capitalist as far as the theology as such is concerned. The economic elements of anti-Semitism also existed in the Protestant context, although less pervasively.

<sup>239</sup> In 1891 Leo XIII tried to square the circle of the Catholic concept of labour with economic reality by maintaining that 'capitalism' meant 'degeneration (Verwilderung und Entartung)' unless that, if it was 'spiritualized' by the 'right spirit', it could be reformed into a civilizing (kulturbejahend) economy.

<sup>240</sup> The time-discipline that is characteristic of a monastery is fundamentally different from the discipline characteristic of a capitalist factory: while in the latter time functions as measurement

Two phenomena are most important and also most perplexing: first, Catholic populist reaction was extremely successful during most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; secondly, its anti-Semitic anti-capitalism was not only shared but further developed by an array of non-Catholic, and even non-reactionary groups and individuals including liberals, democrats and socialists. The notion of the Jews as harbingers or incorporation of capitalism seems to have been the most influential element that mediated between anti-modernist and pro-modernist anti-Semitism as described in the previous section. How is it possible that a concept that stems from medieval Catholic social-ethical-economical thinking (based on contrasting feudal property as legitimate to bourgeois-mercantile property as not, or at least less, legitimate) could be translated into a conception that became immensely effective in the totally different context of industrial capitalism?<sup>241</sup>

Non-Catholics could appropriate ideas that had first come in a Catholic guise because Catholic anti-capitalist and anti-modernist ideology not only antedated capitalism and modernity but also Catholicism itself. Its historical sources (Attic and Hellenistic Enlightenment, classical bourgeois society)<sup>242</sup> allowed it to bridge other, historically younger intellectual divisions (such as between liberalism, conservatism and socialism) in situations when these seemed to become temporarily less significant – first of all, of course, in situations of intensified nation-building, and again in the various forms of crisis that capitalist society produces.

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of quantities, or lengths of time, in the former it signals beginning and ending of time periods (cp. Postone 1996:207-16).

Blaschke emphasizes that this Catholic version of anti-capitalist anti-Semitism was not so much due to tradition but rather to 'Traditionalisierung', i.e. the 'inventing' of tradition, a conscious 19<sup>th</sup> century tendency to re-appropriate elements of medieval thinking (also as part of a revival of scholastic and Thomasian philosophy) (ibid.:135).

<sup>241</sup> For a number of reasons, the same process of developing industrial capitalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century did not lead to significant anti-Semitism in the Netherlands, where the Jews constituted up to 3 per cent of the population (three times the ratio of Germany, and a multiple of the French figure), with Jews constituting up to 13 per cent of Amsterdam's population (and continuing to speak Spanish and Portuguese apart from Jiddish) (von der Dunk 1999:86f). Amongst the various reasons for this might have been a centuries long non-agrarian and non-aristocratic history that did not stigmatize money and money making (helped by the bourgeois-calvinist ethos that went with it).

<sup>242</sup> The Catholic doctrine itself has roots in classical Greek thinking, in particular Platonic conservatism that expressed hostility to certain forms of (classical, i.e. not capitalist) commodity production. 19<sup>th</sup> century Catholicism could mobilise such elements from the legacy of the thinking of classical Mediterranean civilisation (that it inherited *via* Aristotle *via* late medieval Islam and Judaism) that had been preserved within the body of Christian thought (cp for a similar argument Blaschke 1997b:84-91). However, such ideas could only become actually relevant

Anti-Semitic anti-capitalism was channelled from its place of origin in Catholic economic thought through German Romanticism and French Proudhonism into the liberal and socialist traditions (Massing 1949:213).<sup>243</sup> In a polemical remark about the commercially minded bourgeoisie of the wealthy trading place, Hamburg, Heinrich Heine (in a letter from 1816) adopted the traditional imagery in a playful and sarcastic way that can stand for countless similar (although less witty) remarks by others: 'I call all Hamburgers Jews, and those whom I call baptized Jews – in order to distinguish them from the circumcised ones – are *vulgo* called Christians' (quoted in Aschheim 1996:48). Still in the *Kaiserreich*, it was not uncommon that liberals who defended Jewish emancipation would maintain the notion that 'mammonization' is crucial to 'the Jewish spirit', and also that the Jews themselves are the clearest (although not the only) carriers of this 'spirit' (ibid.:56). In popular liberal publications 'Jews were granted a virtual monopoly in caricatures concerned with moneymaking and commerce in its dishonest and vulgar forms' (ibid.). Blaming the nasty sides of moneymaking on 'the Jewish spirit' helped liberals bridge the gap between embracing industrial capitalism but at the same time being 'locked into an older, competing system of values' that stemmed from petty bourgeois, small-scale commodity production. The distinction between financial and industrial-agrarian capital 'provided [the middle classes] with a social critique that did not touch ... private property' (Massing 1949:13).<sup>244</sup> Arendt states that more generally in the period, the 'leftist movement of the lower middle class and the entire propaganda against banking capital turned more or less antisemitic, a development of little importance in industrial Germany but of great significance in France and, to a lesser extent, in Austria' (Arendt 1973:37).<sup>245</sup>

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because of a specific receptivity to them in the mind-set characteristic of members of modern bourgeois society.

<sup>243</sup> Massing points out that a large part of the *Communist Manifesto* is devoted to deriding reactionary, romantic and artisanal forms of socialism. The polemic against Proudhonism runs through Marx's whole life work.

<sup>244</sup> For example the anti-Semite Otto Glagau who attacked 'predatory capital' presented himself as a spokesman of the petty bourgeoisie (Mittelstand) (ibid.:12).

<sup>245</sup> Totally different from Germany, a large portion of the (very few) French Jews were members of the upper bourgeoisie. An explosive social development during and after Napoleon's 'continental system' of blockading trade with Britain (from 1806) accompanied by huge demand for money capital guaranteed their success, and due to census-vote they were a privileged group. This is the background for 19th century France 'becoming the breeding ground of new anti-Jewish moods, tendencies and ideologies' (Schenck 1965:710). Similarly, von der Dunk points out that France, where modern, 'ideological' anti-Semitism originated (with Proudhon, Fourier,



The concept of 'predatory capital' was common property to all populist anti-Semites of the 1870s onwards. It allowed conservatives, reactionaries and the last representatives of old-fashioned petty bourgeois liberalism to appropriate some of the more traditional elements of the socialist movement. At the same time, however, it sharply distanced them from the modern liberalism that was then predominant amongst the upper bourgeoisie ('Manchester' liberalism), and also from Marxist Social Democracy.<sup>246</sup>

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Blanqui, Toussenel, Tridon and others), was the only place where consistently realized emancipation actually created the conditions for the full integration of wealthy Jews into the upper bourgeoisie (von der Dunk 1999:81f). In Germany by comparison, similar arguments anticipated the effects of Jewish emancipation *before* it had a chance of becoming a reality. Arendt writes that only the necessity to take sides against clerical, reactionary, anti-republican anti-Semitism in the context of the Dreyfus affair ended the long tradition of anti-Semitic republican-socialist thought in France (Arendt 1973:47).

<sup>246</sup> Populist anti-Semitism appropriated socialism but fought Marxism. Anti-Semites have no use for the paradoxical realities of capitalism as understood by Marxist dialectics: they reduce all historical phenomena to unchanging essences and hope one day to be able to build the racial community 'on timeless, indestructible qualities', the highest expression of which is the 'Aryan blood', in order to reconstruct Germany 'in the immortal spirit of honor, beauty, friendship, and the regulation of profit' (Massing 1949:103), prevailing against 'the Jewish forces of Mammonism and Marxism'. The racist myth was a static ideology that 'culminated in the dream of a noncompetitive society based on private enterprise' (Massing 1949:102). In analogy to their imagining capitalism without competition, the racists dreamed of history without history: they attempted to 'de-historicize history' by transposing all social categories into biological ones. (For two more theoretical approaches, cp Postone [1986] and Bonefeld [1997]). 'Indeed it was a constant complaint among anti-Semites that the Marxists refused to regard stock exchanges or banks as more wicked than other capitalist institutions' (Pulzer 1988:43) since they 'welcomed the dynamism of the capitalist system as irrevocably insuring its historical demise'. Adolf Stöcker emphasised that he warred only against 'mobile capital', 'stock-exchange capital' while 'Marx and Lassalle ... looked for the roots of the [social] problem not in the direction of the stock-exchange, but of industrial production; they made the industrialists responsible for all social ills and directed the workers' wrath upon them. Our movement corrects this. We show the people that the roots of their plight are in the power of money, in the mercenary spirit of the stock-exchange' (Stöcker quoted in Massing 1949:12). Here lies the immediate political background for the notorious paradox that subsequent generations of anti-Semites held Jews responsible for both the capitalist mode of production and the forces that aimed to overcome it (such as in the anti-Semitic slogan of an alleged alliance of 'the Golden and the Red International'). For understanding this phenomenon it seems crucial to consider the social experience of the contemporaries. Liberalism and socialism could indeed be understood as reflections and aspects of the same socio-historical process. The anti-Semites understood instinctively the dialectical dependency of socialism on capitalism: emancipation of the working class – implying that of humanity – was not a rejection but rather an extension of the liberal project that relied on the dynamism of the capitalist mode of production. In an ironic sense, the 'real movement' that is communism (Manifesto) is the dynamism of capital – i.e. of the antagonistic relation of capital and labour.

Talmon paraphrased similarly the anti-Semitic logic: 'Modern Jewish universalism in the form of international capitalism or international Marxism, was the same thing using two differing disguises, for both aimed at weakening the organic unity of the race and national solidarity' (Talmon 1965:154). The fact that the contemporary reader is baffled by the anti-Semitic notion that capitalism and socialism are both forms of appearance of a common essence, 'the Jew', is due to the circumstance that we take it for granted that 'capitalism' is a reality – and so firmly established a reality that it is quasi 'second nature' – and that Marxist 'socialism' (rather than Catholic conservatism) is its enemy. However, in Europe in the nineteenth century industrial capitalism and socialism could indeed appear as two newly arrived, competing but related

entities. The modernity of both, socialism and capitalism, was still fresh. Whether or not one believes that socialism and capitalism are of the same 'essence' (which might be called 'the Jew' or something else) depends on one's wider world-view. If the notion of the racial-ethnic *Volksgemeinschaft* is the central value around which one's world-view is organized, then it makes sense to perceive different attacks on this central value as of the same essence. Pulzer remarks (writing about Constantin Frantz): 'To the more old-fashioned kind of Conservative anti-Semitism, the fundamental similarities shared by Liberals and Socialists in any case loomed large – their humanism, positivism, internationalism, and the revolutionary origins of their theories all seemed to come out of the same stable' (Pulzer 1988:256).

'Anti-Semitic socialism' (the tradition from Proudhon to Dühring) was forced to re-articulate itself by the ascendancy of the Social Democratic Party (beginning in 1875 with the unification of the two workers' parties in Gotha, but gaining momentum especially in the 1890s): the growing hegemony of the Marxist rejection of Proudhonism and related ideologies meant that anti-Semitic socialism needed to confront (what it understood to be) capitalism and Marxist Social Democracy *at the same time*. This is an important element in Stöcker's rhetoric (as quoted above) and was subsequently developed into a more consistent ideology of Judaism being the 'common essence' of 'capitalism and Marxism'. This conception is not without its irony because the socialism that the anti-Semites themselves tend to endorse is indeed (in the perspective of the Marxist critique) of the same essence with capitalism: it fails to challenge the basic elements of the capitalist mode of production (the value form, commodity production, labour power as a commodity, wage labour). The 'anti-Semitic socialists' attack the Marxist challenge to the capitalist mode of production for being of the same essence with capitalism, while they themselves endorse those elements of the socialist tradition that fail to challenge the capitalist mode of production. The anti-Semitic notion that emancipation of 'unproductive people' (like the Jews) is only welcome if it means that they *become productive* links anti-Semitism to bourgeois ideology while Marx's critique of political economy offers a critique of the bourgeois concept of productivity (namely productivity of value). However, the workers' movement and its institutions did certainly not in their entirety manage to leave behind all these elementary forms of bourgeois theory and praxis, which weakened in turn their members' immunity to anti-Semitism.

#### 1.3.6.4. The historical background of the perception of the socio-economic role of European Jewry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

As Hannah Arendt wrote, anti-Semitism 'must be seen in the more general framework of the development of the nation-state, and at the same time its source must be found in certain aspects of Jewish history and specifically Jewish functions during the last centuries' (Arendt 1973:9).

Until the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD, most Jews at any given place in the world were peasants and artisans, not traders or money-lenders (Bermann 1973:19). The rabbinical ethics of 'classical Judaism' (Halevi 1987) can best be understood as the 'corporate ideology (Standesideologie) of artisans' (Bermann 1973:19); it emphasizes more than most other religious traditions the value of work<sup>247</sup>, and there are many rabbinical injunctions against the money trade (ibid.:18). However, long before the dissolution of the Jewish state in Palestine by the Romans, a large number of Jews all over the Mediterranean basin had been engaged in trade, parallel to the Jewish peasant society in Palestine. As Leon (1993) suggests, Judaism did not share the fate of most other classical Mediterranean civilisations – to vanish at the latest with the decline of the Roman Empire – because a stable diaspora was already in place that was not negatively affected by the events in Palestine, and whose wealthy members warranted the continued existence of Judaism as part of what made their specific network distinct.<sup>248</sup> When after the disintegration of the Roman Empire commodity production shrunk to a minimum in Europe, Jewish traders 'continued to be the sole commercial intermediaries between the East and the West' (Leon 1993:123). But it is not before the high Middle Ages that the Jews of Central Europe were driven out of agriculture and shifted towards whatever economic niche was most open to foreigners and newcomers, first into trade, then, out of trade<sup>249</sup> into money lending (Bermann 1973:23).<sup>250</sup> In Carolingian

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<sup>247</sup> Differing from the Christian interpretation, the rabbinical tradition asserts that Adam was working even in Paradise (Gen.2:15). Maimonides in the 12<sup>th</sup> century praised physical labour (ibid.:20) even, and perhaps especially, for intellectuals and the wealthy.

<sup>248</sup> The Jewish urban poor seem to have embraced Christianity at an early stage, while the Jewish rural poor assimilated and 'disappeared' slowly like many other ethnic groups within Mediterranean civilisation.

<sup>249</sup> With the last Crusade at the latest, Christian traders took over foreign, and subsequently also domestic trade.

<sup>250</sup> In the Mediterranean, Jews continued being artisans (and also for example, like most famously in Salonica, dock workers). In the Arab and Muslim realms, where the huge majority of Jews lived, they continued being peasants and artisans (Halevi 1987).

times, *judaeus* and *mercator* seem to have been used as synonyms; there are documents from the 10<sup>th</sup> century using the phrase 'Jews and other traders' (ibid.:25; also Leon 1993:123). For this period, there is no evidence that Jews have been accused of usury. With the emergence of the guilds and the proclamation of the canonical ban on interest,<sup>251</sup> the Jews of Central Europe were increasingly restricted to usury, and at the same time accused for it. However, usury, at least in its German version ('Wucher', literally: increment) did only successively adopt the moral meaning of 'excessive' interest.<sup>252</sup>

The crisis of Jewry begins with the general crisis at the turn of the millennium, consisting of the disintegration of a precarious balance between local social relations and the imperial-sacral order (Schenck 1965:690f). It brings the European Jews discrimination, ridicule, demonization, separation, expulsion and extermination. Three factors lead to pogroms against Jews: a desperate need of money capital; the general psychopathic-religious state of a large part of the population; shifts in the relations of power.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> As expressed for example by Thomas Aquinas who mediated scholastic dogma (in this context, taken from Augustinus) with Aristotelian philosophy, Catholic doctrine sees interest as the appropriation of the labour of others (Blaschke 1997a:127). Initially the church had only banned *clerics* from taking interest. The ban was generalized since the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Cahnmann 1965:640). For the late middle ages the rule was: 'When the Christian took interest it was a sin and could be repented. When the Jew did the same it seemed natural; from him nothing good was expected' (ibid.:643). However, the ban on interest was sidestepped in many ways whenever money lending was an attractive option. Cahnmann writes that the 'relation between creditor and debtor is the central conflict situation of an agrarian and small-scale commodity exchanging society' (ibid.:639).

<sup>252</sup> To say that only Jews tended to be 'usurers' in certain rural areas is to say nothing other than that only Jews were giving credit when others saw no creditworthiness. Precarious small scale credit always carries a higher interest rate than more secure forms of credit. Sterling mentions that in 1836, large scale landowners in the Prussian Rhineland managed to persuade the state to ban Jewish 'usury', referring to the misery it allegedly brought on the peasants, to the effects that the latter had to sell off their land to the same landowners because of a lack of cash flow (Sterling 1969:33).

<sup>253</sup> The lowest echelons of the population are destitute and owe money, and are also most receptive to religious fanaticism. The towns strive for greater autonomy and fight the territorial princes. The princes try to gain greater autonomy with respect to the Imperial order. The Jews (as 'Kammerknechte') tended to be protected by the Imperial power (in return for cash payment) against princes, towns and the people, and came thus to be seen as representatives of the alien, distant power of the Empire. Furthermore, a confident higher bourgeoisie arose next to the artisanal petty bourgeoisie that ventured into money economy and became successful competitors to the Jews (ibid.:694f).

Drawing on 16<sup>th</sup> century cases, Po-Chia Hsia asserts that the agitation against Jewish usury did not primarily come from the lower classes that were directly engaged in this way with Jews but from parts of the clergy and the guilds who feared the Jewish competition in selling small consumer goods cheap (Po-Chia Hsia 1995:165). Many of the 16<sup>th</sup> century texts quoted by Po-Chia Hsia have a tendency of jumping without much mediation from a religious anti-Jewish to an anti-usury discussion that is explicitly directed at Christian as well as Jewish usurers, both called 'Jews'.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries the guilds managed to have the Jews driven out of most German towns onto the countryside. This is the beginning of the twin phenomenon of a large number of impoverished peddlers and *Betteljuden* and the minute number of wealthy 'Court Jews' (Bermann 1973:30).

The history of anti-Semitism begins at the time when the Jews become dispensable and therefore vulnerable.<sup>254</sup> Ironically, the *modern* anti-Jewish discourse preserves the equation of Jew with 'merchant' although it had been meaningful only in the context of *medieval* economy when Jews did to a certain extent represent money economy as a foreign, external element within an 'underdeveloped', de-commodified economic order. To the extent that Europe resumed commodity-production on a wider scale, let alone when it developed the capitalist mode of production, this equation became less and less meaningful – but it did not come out of use.

The expulsions of the Jews in the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries were from the more advanced (England, France, Spain) towards the more backward countries, with the largest number ending up at the bottom of that ladder, Poland, while some survived in the less developed pockets of Germany and Italy (Leon 1993:153). Everywhere except in Poland<sup>255</sup> begins the time of petty usury, ghettos, persecutions, special taxes and second hand goods dealing.

Germany after the religious wars was a destroyed and impoverished area 'inhabited by a petty people sticking to *ständische* and *zünftlerische* privileges' (Cahnmann 1965:657), not conducive to the formation of a national bourgeoisie

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Medieval law, following Roman law and in contrast to modern political economy, refused to understand money as a (special) commodity and 'considered gold and silver as tokens possessing imaginary value, varying at the will of the king' (Lazare 1995:60). In the absence of a concept of (commodity) value and any adequate theory of money, the 'price of money' was subjected to ethical-political-theological considerations. The more society was monetarised, the less viable an 'ethical approach' to determining interest was. In modern society, any interference with the law of value comes at a price that a ruling group can only afford in exceptional circumstances (such as intense pressure from the value-producing classes combined with conditions of a high rate of profit).

<sup>254</sup> For the larger part of the Middle Ages, very little was produced in Europe that potential trading partners in the Orient would have been interested in buying. The few places where goods for exchange (such as textiles) were produced (some cities in Flanders and Italy that were both industrial and commercial places) soon began developing a Christian class of merchants who subsequently began the process of pushing the Jewish merchants out of business (Leon 1993:137). Leon writes that the relevance of legal restrictions for this process has been exaggerated: barriers for medieval subjects to change profession were a generic phenomenon. In feudal society, everyone 'should remain in his place' (Leon 1993:142).

<sup>255</sup> The most economically 'backward', i.e. non-bourgeois place was also the only one where religious toleration was a principle of governance.

and a modern state.<sup>256</sup> In this situation – in the German context more than in others – Jews became the allies of modernising absolutist monarchs operating towards what would later turn out to be ‘bourgeois society’, but *against* the opposition of the urban *bourgeoisies*. After the Thirty Years War, money capital was rare and desperately sought after by the territorial princes, and for the temporary lack of a strong enough Christian bourgeoisie to provide the necessary monies, a small number of rich Jews became *Hoffjuden*.<sup>257</sup>

Hannah Arendt suggests that in the modern period, *state* credit remained the only actual financial service that Jews had a *quasi* monopoly on. Even this, though, was temporary: Christian banks began to handle state credit in increasing measure since around 1830 (Arendt 1973:19). ‘The last war financed by a Jew was the Prussian-Austrian war of 1866’ (ibid.:20).<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> State formation obviously means to the individual merchant or manufacturer a deduction from the revenue. No state can be formed unless a group of people is prepared, or can be forced, to pay the bills.

<sup>257</sup> In England, France and Spain the consolidation of large territorial states – that would subsequently be re-interpreted as nation states – happened after or coincided with the expulsion of the Jews (in 1290, 1394, 1492). The impoverished population (that was inclined to seeing devils and witches at work anywhere) could easily jump to conclusions when it saw a small number of people rising from the most destitute to considerably well off positions in a time of general destitution while the bourgeoisie kept in mind the memory of the Jews as allies of the princes (Schenck 1965:702).

Since even after readmission their numbers were small in these countries, the mythic and demonic Jews of Christian mythology were not necessarily matched to empirical, actual Jews. People participating in the Christian folklore must have been less likely to assume that ‘the Jews’ are actually existing people rather than characters of mythology. In Germany, however, the Jews were numerous, visible and lived under the precarious condition that the lack of a uniform legal and political system prevented their effective expulsion as well as their integration or permanent establishment (Schenck 1965:698f; also Cahnmann 1965:649). The failure of a ‘bourgeois revolution’ (from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) to occur was, first of all, responsible for the fact that a considerable number of Jews *survived* in Germany.

<sup>258</sup> Together with the traditional concern for the ‘European balance of power’, the tendency of governments (irrespective of their specific character) to make use of the inter-national connections of the Jews also eclipsed in the Imperialist period (ibid.:22).

### 1.3.7 The anti-Semitic discourse in Germany before and around 1879

Massing observed that the periods in which anti-Semitism blossomed during the *Second Reich* were the periods in which the Conservatives were hostile towards the government (Massing 1949:104): the last phase of Bismarck's liberal era (1875-78) stimulated anti-Semitism's ascendancy for the first time, while during the reactionary period (1886-90) the anti-Semitic movement virtually disappeared. It enjoyed a revival during the liberal era under chancellor Caprivi (1890-94). This observation allows an important conclusion on the relative impact of the different strands of anti-Semitism at the time: only established Conservatism was able to mobilise efficiently, while all other tendencies of anti-Semitism – the 'radicals' of all shapes and forms – remained marginal then and were basically fellow-travellers of the Conservatives.<sup>259</sup> A good illustration of this is the case of the 'Antisemitenpetition', an anti-Semitic petition that was circulated in fall 1880 and seems to have constituted the high water mark of anti-Semitic publicity when it fetched a quarter of a million signatures all over the *Reich*.<sup>260</sup> Although initiated by an assemblage of radical anti-Semites of diverse backgrounds, it 'merely demanded the legalization of what was the predominant administrative practice anyway' (Hamburger 1968:37).<sup>261</sup>

The presentation in this chapter moves from the more mainstream towards the more fringe phenomena.

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<sup>259</sup> The fact that the latter received much more attention in the scholarly literature than their importance in their own day alone would warrant has obviously to do with the larger impact they later had on Nazism.

<sup>260</sup> The petition was debated in the Prussian diet in November 1880 (after the 'Freisinnige' party demanded the government make a public statement on the petition). On New Year's Eve night 1880/81 'organized gangs of hooligans provoked anti-Semitic incidents outside coffee-houses in Berlin Friedrichstadt' after a mass rally organized by the group behind the *Antisemitenpetition* (Belke 1978:61f).

<sup>261</sup> In practical terms and despite legal emancipation, only converted Jews tended to be admitted to state office in the German *Reich*. Conversion (far from being about religion in a spiritual sense) functioned in this context as proof of an individual's readiness to function as a loyal and disinterested bureaucrat (Hamburger 1968:98) – for the Jews, of course, an *additional* test of commitment.

### 1.3.7.1 Conservative and mainstream anti-Semitism

Until the mid-1870s, anti-Semitic pamphlets were generally seen as expressions of 'private opinions' of individuals (Massing 1949:14).<sup>262</sup> 'The turn came in 1875' when anti-Semitism was 'taken up by two politically defined newspapers', 'Kreuzzeitung', the voice of orthodox Prussian Protestantism,<sup>263</sup> and 'Germania', the organ of the Catholic Centre Party.<sup>264</sup>

In January 1874 – at a time when the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf* had been going on for three years<sup>265</sup> and economic recession for one year – the Conservatives suffered a massive election defeat by the National Liberals and the Catholic Centre. The anti-Semitic articles of the *Kreuzzeitung* that were answered – in a more violent and hateful tone – by those in the *Germania* seem to have been a deliberate offer of co-operation to a new potential ally (Massing 1949:17).<sup>266</sup> The initial tone was set by Franz Perrot who called 'our fellow citizens of Semitic race and Mosaic belief ... the actual leaders of the National-Liberal majority in the Reichstag' (*Kreuzzeitung* 148 [1875], quoted in Bernhardt 1994:36). The articles in the *Kreuzzeitung* attacked in particular the economic aspects of Bismarck's policy which was tarred as 'a banker's policy made for and by Jews'.

The articles in the *Germania* claimed that hatred and persecution of Jews 'were never caused by religious fanaticism, but were, rather, a protest of the Germanic race against the intrusion of an alien tribe'. They supported this claim

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<sup>262</sup> The most interesting strictly conservative anti-Semite was Konstantin Frantz (born 1817, the son of a Lutheran pastor) who had been an admirer of Bismarck until Bismarck's exclusion of Austria from the German League (Pulzer 1988:72). He published his first anti-Jewish pamphlet in 1844 but is best known for his 'The Religion of National Liberalism' (1872) and 'National Liberalism and Jewish Domination' (1874). He advocated 'social monarchy' (Pulzer 1988:74) but – differing from state socialist *Kathedersozialisten* – he refused to accept the reality of industrial civilization.

<sup>263</sup> The actual name of this publication was 'Neue Preussische Zeitung', founded in 1848. The articles are in nos. 148-152 (29.6. – 3.7 1875). One of the editors of the *Kreuzzeitung* was Hermann Goedsche who had published the novel 'Biarritz' (1868) that was later used as one of the sources of the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' (Mosse 1966:128). On 'Biarritz' see Mosse 1978:116ff.

<sup>264</sup> In the nos. 174, 185, 189, 190, 201, 203, 228.

<sup>265</sup> On the *Kulturkampf* see Wehler 1995:892-902

<sup>266</sup> In the elections to the Prussian diet (1873) and those to the Reichstag (1874) Conservative seats were slashed by roughly two thirds (Wehler 1995:918). There were then two Conservative parties, the 'Free Conservatives' (officially called 'Deutsche Reichspartei' since 1871) (ibid.:920), the '*Partei Bismarck sans phrase*' (ibid.:921) who co-operated with the National Liberals, and the 'Old Conservatives' (officially called 'Deutschkonservative Partei' since 1876) who were anti-liberal, anti-state, anti-modern and defended for example clerical control of education. Their organ was the *Kreuzzeitung* (ibid.:918).



with anti-Jewish quotes from (non-Catholic!) authors such as Goethe, Herder, Kant, Fichte and Bismarck.<sup>267</sup> The *Germania* pointed out that there were few Jews in the 'productive strata' and interpreted the *Kulturkampf* as a Jewish war of revenge. It called for 'emancipation of the Christians from the Jews' and for Christian economic solidarity: 'Don't buy from Jews!' (Massing 1949:14f). In the aftermath of both series of articles, a group of Conservatives and Catholics came together as the 'Anti-Chancellor League' and continued publishing on the same tracks.

1877 saw the publication of the book 'Political Promoters (Gründer) and corruption in Germany'<sup>268</sup> by Rudolf Meyer who played a central role in the 'Anti-Chancellor League' (Pulzer 1988:76). Meyer was 'the most extreme anti-Bismarckian, anti-Semitic State Socialist' who perhaps most convincingly represented the Conservative idea the monarchy be responsible for the welfare of the working class.<sup>269</sup> Meyer's target was Bismarck who he argued was 'owned by the Jews and the *Gründer*' (Pulzer 1988:78).<sup>270</sup>

Another leading anti-Semite close to the extremely conservative part of the Lutheran Prussian establishment was the priest *Adolf Stöcker*. He came from a lower middle class background and via a career through university and army became a court chaplain in 1874. He had close relations to the *Kreuzzeitung* and was a life-long friend of Adolf Wagner, a Berlin University economist and the leading *Kathedersozialist* of the 1880s (Massing 1949:22). Stöcker's fundamental attitude – rooted in Christian economic doctrine – is summed up in a formulation from 1874 when he described socialism as 'an offspring of materialism, created in the palaces of atheist wealth' (ibid.:23; cp. *chapter 1.3.6.3*).

<sup>267</sup> The 'Germania' quoted a speech by Bismarck from 1847.

<sup>268</sup> Mehring, Engels and Bebel thought highly of this book when it first came out (Pulzer 1988:76).

<sup>269</sup> He had previously published a pioneering and sympathetic work on the labour movement in Europe and the USA ('The fourth estate's struggle for emancipation') (1874-5) (ibid.:75). After the publication of his book on the *Gründer*-period he was forced into exile.

<sup>270</sup> Pulzer writes that Meyer was not 'haunted ... with the paranoiac's hallucination of the Jewish demon lurking behind every misfortune' (ibid.). Meyer was a disciple of Rodbertus and became in the 1890s a contributor to the Social Democratic 'Neue Zeit'. Mehring reported that it was Meyer who initially interested Stöcker in social reform but that he did not support Stöcker's movement (Massing 1949:215).

In 1878 Stöcker founded the 'Christian Social Workers' Party'<sup>271</sup> (Wistrich 1982:90) which attempted to promote a clerical version of Prussian state socialist reformism, timed to parallel the anti-Socialist laws of the same year. The party made some headway only after Stöcker increased the use of anti-Semitic rhetoric from September 1879. From then on, he managed successfully to translate traditional Conservative anti-Semitism into an urban populist movement. Still, Stöcker 'made no secret of the fact that Social Democracy was his chief enemy' (ibid.:93).<sup>272</sup>

His 'first full-dress anti-Semitic attack', a speech on 'What we demand of Modern Jewry' was held on September 19, 1879 (Massing 1949:29f). Already the emphasis on *modern* Jewry in the title points to Stöcker's claim that he 'respected' or even 'loved' Jews as long as they remained religious, i.e. were not 'modern' Jews.<sup>273</sup>

The argument of Stöcker's first explicitly anti-Semitic speech<sup>274</sup> took the following form:

- 'Jewish papers assail our faith' (in Massing 1949:279).
- 'I do indeed consider modern Jewry a great danger to German national life' (ibid.).
- '*Please, be a little more modest!*' (ibid.:281)
- 'Modern Jewry is most certainly a power against religion' (ibid.:283).
- 'They persist in remaining Jews' (ibid.:284).
- '*Please, be a little more tolerant!*' (ibid.)
- 'The worst Berlin papers are in the hands of Jews and ... the Jewish element completely dominates the editorial staffs' (ibid.:284f).

<sup>271</sup> The 'Workers' was dropped in 1881 after workers failed to turn up.

<sup>272</sup> Stöcker was a pioneer in a new form of politics: the 'enemies of democratic rule now had to make use of the democratic process to maintain the old structure of power' (Massing 1949:27). However, although anti-Semitism was 'inherent in the orthodox Protestant concept of the Christian state', it was not in the foreground of his rhetoric as long as he tried to target workers. To the extent that the workers' organizations were influenced by Marxism (rather than by non-Marxist traditions of socialist thought), they stressed explicitly that it did not matter whether their exploiters were Christian or Jewish. Only when Stöcker redirected his efforts at the middle classes, did anti-Semitism become central.

<sup>273</sup> In a letter written in September 1880 (but published only in 1895), Stöcker wrote that he wanted to attack 'only frivolous, godless, usurious, fraudulent Jewry which, indeed, is the misfortune of our people' (ibid.:30). (Stöcker seems to allude here to Treitschke's famous formulation.) Stöcker later claimed that Bismarck's social welfare policy was his political victory (ibid.:44); the apogee of Stöcker's movement was in 1881, it was already in marked decline by 1884.

<sup>274</sup> A translation is contained in Massing 1949:278-87.

- 'Our sacred institutions are constantly dragged into the dust' (ibid.:285).
- 'Unless these wells of poison are cleaned out, the situation cannot improve' (ibid.).
- 'Germany's splendour will arise with new life after this period of decline' (ibid.).
- 'The Jews are and remain a people within a people, a state within a state, a separate tribe within a foreign race. All immigrants are eventually absorbed by the people among whom they live – all save the Jews' (ibid.:285f).
- 'They control the arteries of money, banking, and trade; they dominate the press and they are flooding the institutions of higher learning' (ibid.:286).
- 'And this is where we make our third request. Modern Jewry must take part in productive work: *a little more equality, please!*' (ibid.).
- 'They do not enjoy work and ... they do not believe in the German concept of dignity of labor' (ibid.).
- 'Hatred of the Jews is already flaring up here and there, and this is repugnant to the Gospels. If modern Jewry continues to use the power of capital and the power of the press to bring misfortune to the nation, a final catastrophe is unavoidable. Israel must renounce its ambition to become the master of Germany' (ibid.:287).
- 'Either we succeed in this ... or ... German spirit will become Judaized' (ibid.).

Treitschke's first article in the *Berlin Anti-Semitism Dispute* – written only weeks later – takes its cues from Stöcker's speech to an extent that borders on plagiarism, despite the verbal contempt that Treitschke had for Stöcker.

Another mainstream source of anti-Semitism in the period were the writings by the journalist *Otto Glagau*, which, however, were far removed from the reactionary establishment that provided the background for the previously mentioned writers and agitators.

From December 1874, Glagau published a series of articles ('The Stock exchange and speculation fraud in Berlin') in the moderate liberal *Gartenlaube*<sup>275</sup> (Massing 1949:10) which seems to have had a readership of two million (Claussen 1987:105). The *Gartenlaube* stood for a 'fusion of political liberalism, *Kitsch* and mass following', it was anti-aristocratic and generally supported 'equal opportunities' (Wassermann 1978:48). It usually presented the German middle classes a *schmalz* Judaism (ibid.:52) as quaint, *gemütlich* and

unthreatening as their own 'Christian culture'.<sup>276</sup> Glagau's articles provided a form of moralistic indictment of dishonest business practices that included references to anti-Jewish stereotypes as a rhetorical element of their populist journalistic style (Katz 1988:285). Glagau presented himself as a defender of petty bourgeois economic interest against big industry and (allegedly Jewish) finance capital (Wistrich 1982:53).<sup>277</sup> In 1878, Glagau's articles were published as a widely read book (Massing 1949:212).<sup>278</sup>

Glagau's target was National Liberalism. He claimed that before 1866, it had campaigned abstractly for 'freedom' and 'unity' while since 1866 it set out establishing '*Manchester freedoms*' that enabled the *Gründer* to rob the people of their money. In this context, Glagau claims that 90 per cent of the *Gründer* were Jewish (quoted in Claussen 1987:94)<sup>279</sup>. In another text also published in 1878, Glagau blamed Jewish liberals – Lasker and Bamberger – for the liberalisation of trade and stock exchange and criticized liberal hypocrisy in the face of the uprooting of handicraft by industry, the disappearance of the peasantry and the emergence of a 'destitute proletariat' (Massing 1949:11). Manchesterism 'wants to transform everything into money', it 'rejects all sense of solidarity, humanity and all ethical principles' and 'preaches crass materialism'. The freedom of trade and movement that it has brought to the worker is actually just 'the freedom to choose the occupation and the place where he may starve to death':

Jewry is applied Manchesterism in the extreme. It knows nothing any more but trade, and of that merely haggling and usury. It does not work but makes others work for it, it haggles and speculates with the manual and mental products of others. Its centre is the stock exchange ... As an alien

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<sup>275</sup> The word means 'summer house' or 'bower' and implies that this publication is meant to be read in leisurely and recreational surroundings.

<sup>276</sup> It presupposed that its readers were used to an undemanding, light version of religion that was more or less indifferent to any specific religious content – a petty bourgeois clientele who would not have the stomach for either actually believing, or not believing in a religion. Like the *Grenzboten* in the same period, it shifted from liberal to conservative in the course of the 1880s (ibid.:55).

<sup>277</sup> In the form that Glagau's articles appeared in the *Gartenlaube* (edited by its liberal editor), they were not anti-liberal and not aggressively anti-Semitic (Katz 1988:285; also Wassermann 1978:60). Katz writes that Glagau developed a straightforwardly anti-Semitic discourse only when he experienced that the public seemed to respond particularly positive to the anti-Jewish formulations that he occasionally used.

<sup>278</sup> As Katz writes, Glagau's often quoted formulation, 'the social question is nothing but the Jewish question' was made not in the *Gartenlaube* but in the book only (Katz 1988:285).

<sup>279</sup> Claussen seems to be quoting from the book version of Glagau's articles.

tribe it fastens itself on the German people and sucks their marrow. The social question is essentially the Jewish question; everything else is swindle (ibid.).

On an optimistic tone, Glagau claims that the number of 'decent and honest folk' was slowly rising (from 'The Stock exchange...', quoted in Claussen 1987:97) and concludes:

I do not want to murder or slaughter the Jews, nor drive them out of the country; I do not want to take away any of their possessions, but I want to change them thoroughly<sup>280</sup> (ibid.:103f).

Although being 'a physically as well as psychically decidedly degenerate race', they 'are ruling the whole world'.<sup>281</sup> From the Jews 'we can learn' how to function as 'a single chain, closely knit'.<sup>282</sup>

Of somewhat similar background to the case of the *Gartenlaube* is the case of the periodical '*Grenzboten*'. Founded in the 1840s, it was a liberal publication<sup>283</sup> that 'swung over to supporting Bismarck ... without qualification' – due to Bismarck's co-operation with National Liberalism – by the end of the 1870s (Sheehan 1978:195). In 1880 it published articles that were written by *Moritz Busch*<sup>284</sup> – press officer in the Foreign Office and Bismarck's 'journalistic handy man' – in which the foundation of a cross-party and cross-denomination umbrella organisation solely dedicated to anti-Semitism was suggested (Massing 1949:84).

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<sup>280</sup> '... aber ich will sie revidiren, und zwar funditus revidiren'.

<sup>281</sup> This example shows how the anti-Semitic discourse connects the notion of Jewish inferiority with that of Jewish superiority: the Jews are (effectively) superior through being (morally) inferior. This stands against the often repeated suggestion that the concept of anti-Semitism ought to be strictly demarcated from that of racism because racists see their objects as inferior, anti-Semites see their objects as superior.

<sup>282</sup> From 1880-89, Glagau edited an anti-liberal and anti-Semitic middle class magazine called '*Der Kulturkämpfer*' (Massing 1949:212).

<sup>283</sup> Since 1848 the *Grenzboten* was edited by Gustav Freytag and Julian Schmidt and targeted a bourgeois readership that the editors aimed to educate towards national self-consciousness and the trust in Prussian liberalism (Wehler 1995:242). The name of the publication means 'messenger from the border'.

<sup>284</sup> They were first published anonymously, in subsequent book publications under Busch's name (Pulzer 1988:96).

### 1.3.7.2 The anti-Semitic fringe

In 1879, for the first time an explicitly racial, populist and anti-Christian anti-Semitic publication reached mass circulation, *Wilhelm Marr's* 'The victory of Judaism (des Judentums) over Germandom (das Germanentum), regarded from the nondenominational point of view' (Pulzer 1988:47).<sup>285</sup> In this text, 'Jew' was contrasted not with Christian, but with German, along a line of division which was not accidental and remediable but eternal and indelible' (ibid.). This was a far from original idea,<sup>286</sup> but Marr's publication marked the point when this kind of argument found a ready readership.<sup>287</sup> Marr also founded in 1879 the short-lived *Antisemitenliga*.

Marr argued that it was 'idiotic' to blame the Jews for Christ's crucifixion, 'a performance staged, as we know, by the Roman authorities which yielded in a cowardly fashion to the howling mob of Jerusalem'. He declared himself for 'the unconditional defence of the Jews against all "religious" persecution' (Massing 1949:7; note the inverted commas around 'religious'). Because the Jews were an oppressed group it was only natural that they greeted the revolutions of 1789 and 1848 – they cannot be blamed for that. However, the fact that they are the dominant power in the West (Jewish monopoly of the press is a major theme for Marr) is due to their racial qualities, and only a general pogrom can save the Germanic peoples from 'Judaization'. Marr sees 'passionate popular indignation' on the rise.

Marr presents himself as a disillusioned democrat and atheist who turns his back on liberalism (which he finds is 'Judaized' and materialist) but neither wants to embrace socialism. 'Like Voltaire, Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer, Wilhelm Marr saw the root of all tyranny and evil in monotheistic religion'

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<sup>285</sup> Pulzer and Massing, as well as most other scholars seem to quote from a 12<sup>th</sup> edition of 1879. Pulzer and Massing suggest that there was a first edition in 1873. Most others suggest that all twelve editions are from 1879 (Nipperdey/Rürup 1972:138; Zimmermann 1978:91; Katz 1988:281; Bernhardt 1994:37). A facsimile of the eighth edition (1879) is downloadable from [www.gehove.de/antisem/](http://www.gehove.de/antisem/).

<sup>286</sup> Marr had himself published an earlier version of the same argument in his *Judenspiegel* (1862) (Massing 1949:6).

<sup>287</sup> Whether or not there was an edition of 1873, the more important fact is that the text went through a large number of editions in 1879.

(Wistrich 1982:53). The economic behaviour that he considered characteristically Jewish was for him a manifestation of the former.<sup>288</sup>

Marr was also the first editor of 'The German Guard, Monthly for national cultural interests, published by the anti-Jewish Association',<sup>289</sup> whose first issue appeared in November 1879.<sup>290</sup> Already the following year, Marr was replaced as editor by *H. Naudh*,<sup>291</sup> the author of another emblematic text of racial, anti-Christian anti-Semitism, 'The Jews and the German state' which was then in its tenth edition.<sup>292</sup> Naudh discusses the 'Jewish Question' strictly as a problem of the state and its underlying morality (*Sittlichkeit*), claiming that *Sittlichkeit* is determined by race.

Naudh and Marr are the two anti-Semites who are most unequivocally not anti-modern but re-articulate the *pro-modernisation anti-Semitism* from the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The thrust of their argument is to show that Jews cannot be part of modern liberal society and that their presence endangers its

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<sup>288</sup> 'Marr's extreme hatred of Catholicism was no less virulent than his attacks on Judaism'. In his youth he had been 'preaching a confused atheistic utopia to German artisans in Switzerland' (*ibid.*).

<sup>289</sup> 'Die Deutsche Wacht, Monatsschrift für nationale Kulturinteressen – Organ der antijüdischen Vereinigung'. I quote from the bound edition of the first year's issues (Berlin 1880).

<sup>290</sup> The leader article in the first issue of the journal has the form of an appeal to the two chambers of the Reich (The title is: 'An die Adresse des hohen Bundesrathes und des deutschen Reichstages'.) It starts with a list of all the liberties that had been fought for in 1848 and that have subsequently been revised and restricted, or have never been implemented fully in the first place. The article suggests that only one of the 'achievements' ('Errungenschaften' – in inverted commas in the original) has *not* been reversed: Jewish emancipation. Marr (the article is not signed, but most probably written by the editor) points out that he had himself been amongst the 'cloud-cuckoo-landers (Wolkenwandler)' of the 'people's springtime' a mistake of which he says he is not ashamed. The author goes on to tell the 'unvarnished truth' of the 'democratic' (again in inverted commas in the original) birth of Jewish emancipation. He claims that Jewish emancipation has actually never been supported by the majority of any assembly, but it had to be 'fabricated and smuggled in' in a package together with other demands including general suffrage and freedom of the press (*Deutsche Wacht* 1880:3): 'Jewish emancipation has been a contraband of the revolution of 1848'. The 'sufferings' that stem from Jewish emancipation are worse than any other endured by the German nation: 'All of society sighs under the spirit of Jewification (*Verjudung*) that has become flesh and blood ... and grows like cancer' (*ibid.*:4). Emancipation should not remain the only 'achievement' of 1848 that escaped revision.

'*Verjudung*' seems to have been coined as a neologism by Richard Wagner in 1850 (Aschheim 1996:56). However, it became common currency only after emancipation (*ibid.*:46). There is an element of disappointed expectations of the effects of emancipation in this notion. The concept – although with a different meaning – had been part of the discourse of Christianity since its very beginnings: the followers of St. Paul called that the followers of St. Peter who urged conformity to Jewish ritual law (*ibid.*). The fear that Judaism might somehow be able to 'reclaim' the church was never completely absent from Christian theology.

<sup>291</sup> synonym for H.G. Nordmann

<sup>292</sup> It appeared first anonymously, the fifth edition is from 1862. Naudh claims its authorship in his 'Israel im Heere' (1879). In a pamphlet from August 1879, an opponent of anti-Semitism (Scholl 1879) claims that Marr's text merely emulates Naudh's publications. Naudh's argument is indeed richer and better supported than Marr's.

successful realisation. They combine anti-Jewish ideas with various references to modern bourgeois political thought. From their autobiographical remarks it is clear that the failure of 1848 is pivotal to their thinking: anti-Semitism seems for them a way of rationalizing the experience that the ‘democratic’ revolution they had been hoping for did not realize.<sup>293</sup>

Many of the lesser known pamphlets seem to be predominantly focussed on economic arguments. One of the most straightforwardly economical pamphlets is by *Egon Waldegg* which is a pseudonym for *Alexander Pinkert*, the leader of the small ‘German Reform Party’ and organiser of the first ‘International Anti-Jewish congress’ in Dresden in 1882 (Zimmermann 1978:93). His pamphlet ‘The Jewish question in relation to German trade and industry, A Manifesto directed to the German nation’ was first published in September 1879.<sup>294</sup> One ‘*Junius*’ argues in ‘Jewry and the daily press, A warning in difficult times’ (1879) that ‘Jewry/Judaism (das Judentum) is the illness of the 19<sup>th</sup> century’ (Junius 1879:7), it ‘represents the power (Grossmacht) of capital against that of purely spiritual (geistige) interests’ (ibid.:3). ‘The state is in danger of material ruin’ and the press – instead of delivering enlightenment (Aufklärung) – merely ‘serves economic interests’ (ibid.:4f).

*Eugen Dühring*, who had by that time developed a ‘sort of “national” Socialism’ based on national self-sufficiency in a controlled economy (Pulzer 1988:50) but differed from the *Kathedersozialisten* through a stronger affirmation of populism took up Marr’s discourse and developed it into what was then ‘the ne plus ultra of anti-Semitic extremism’ (ibid.) in his atheist work, ‘The

<sup>293</sup> The same is true about Richard Wagner. Wagner had published in 1850 (under a pseudonym) the essay ‘Judaism (Judentum) in Music’ (in the specialist publication, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*) which had a small circulation and provoked few responses. It was a (mostly aesthetic) polemic against ‘Hebrew taste’ and attacked the works of Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Heine and Börne. In 1869, Wagner published (under his real name) a largely re-written and longer version of the text as a pamphlet that received many more – mostly negative – responses. This version of Wagner’s text was much more straightforwardly racist and became a point of reference for the emerging anti-Semitic movement. The edition by Fischer (2000) documents and annotates the differences between the two versions of the text.

<sup>294</sup> Waldegg appeals to members of the middle classes to join a ‘Reform Party’ that should support the monarchy and play a crucial role in the development of a ‘people’s parliament’. This is supported by an extended economical argument. In the anti-Semitic material that was published immediately before and around the time of the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* economic arguments seem to figure much more strongly than in the exchange between Treitschke and his critics. The precise argumentative structure of the anti-Jewish campaign of that time, how it differs from the *Streit* and which discourse had what kind of impact on readers or participants is something I hope to be able to analyze in detail on some later occasion.



Jewish question as a question of race, morality and culture'.<sup>295</sup> He stressed that it is 'precisely the baptized Jews who infiltrate furthest'. This was why he saw need for a strictly racial form of anti-Semitism (quoted from Mendes-Flohr/Reinharz 1980:273). Dühring also argued that 'Semite' was 'a euphemism' when referring to the Jews because 'the Jews are a particular small tribe (Volksstämmchen) within the Semitic race' and its 'most evil manifestation' (quoted in Claussen 1994b:46). He differed from Treitschke and also Naudh when he stated that the 'Jewish question' is 'more of a concern for society than for the state' (ibid.:49).<sup>296</sup> Against conservatives, and also against Treitschke whom he did not regard as a serious fellow anti-Semite, Dühring insisted anti-Semitism should be more than a tactical instrument of anti-liberalism.<sup>297</sup>

<sup>295</sup> 'Die Judenfrage als Racen-, Sitten- und Kulturfrage' (1881). Cp. Claussen (1994b:64).

<sup>296</sup> He also seemed to differ from Marr when he stated one should not exaggerate the Jews' power: they do not create all evil in the world, they merely manage to instrumentalise existing corruption for their egotistic purposes (Pulzer 1988:50). 'Unfortunately', so Dühring, they also manage to exploit 'human rights' and 'modern social freedom' in this way (ibid.:51) to the effect that equality as introduced by the French Revolution has been perverted into inequality (ibid.:52).

<sup>297</sup> Two other important activists of the time were Ernst Henrici, who was involved in the founding of the 'Soziale Reichs Partei' in 1880. His agitation lasted only from 1880-82. He claimed to speak for 'all truly liberal citizens' (Massing 1949:85). Max Liebermann von Sonnenberg was also a racist anti-Semite, but from the ultra-conservative camp (ibid.:86).

## 1.4 Treitschke's liberalism

If the most crucial characteristic of a liberal is a commitment to bourgeois, rather than feudal-aristocratic society, then Treitschke was undoubtedly a liberal at any point of his career. What place, if any, there should be for the aristocracy and for aristocratic values *once bourgeois society is established*, is a different question. Treitschke's view that they did have an important role to play was clearly not shared by every liberal, but neither was it an illiberal view. The same can be said about how Treitschke related *the state* to the concept of *individual liberty*, and what these three elements of the liberal world-view – according to Treitschke – meant for political practice.

### 1.4.1 Bourgeois society

Treitschke's aim has consistently been the 'expansion of the power of the bourgeoisie' for which the national state was central (Langer 1998:377). On many occasions Treitschke celebrated quintessential bourgeois values: in a speech given at a festival of 'gymnasts' (Turner) in 1863 he praised the bourgeois sense of enterprise, the creation of wealth in the German towns and the bourgeois notion of the 'nobility of labour (Adel der Arbeit)' that made 'our economy more moral and more joyful (sittlicher und freudiger)' (quoted *ibid.*:101).<sup>298</sup> In an essay on 'The Republic of the United Netherlands' (1869) Treitschke depicted the Dutch struggle of liberation from Habsburg rule with undivided sympathy (Langer 1998:205). He remarks that 'amongst this industrious little nation (bei diesem emsigen Völkchen) trade and industry seem to have been more a passion than a business (Geschäft). Everybody was trading, and everybody traded with every commodity ...'. He saw in the revolutionary Dutch the *avant garde* of the modern bourgeoisie and its primary virtues, labour and thrift (*ibid.*:208).<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> In the same speech Treitschke also argued that the dynamic of bourgeois economic success will finally lead to unification, and he admonished the 'gymnasts' not to forget that the Germans were 'one flesh and one blood' (*ibid.*:102).

<sup>299</sup> Even Treitschke's notorious essay on the 'Teutonic Knights' (1862) (which provides a quasi-mythical pre-history to the claim to leadership of the modern Prussian state) is written from a liberal-bourgeois perspective insofar as it emphasizes the role of German merchants in the colonization of the East – although these merchants depended on the protection by a heroic warrior aristocracy (Iggers 1971:71).

When Treitschke nevertheless invoked bourgeois reconciliation with the aristocracy, he did so not out of sympathy for feudal social relations, but in order to counterbalance the booming capitalist economy and the mind-set and the social dynamism it comes along with. Treitschke saw the aristocracy – within the context of an established bourgeois society, i.e. under the conditions of a society that was *not* aristocratic – as allies to his *bildungsbürgerliche* liberalism. It has to be seen in this context that he attacked what he saw as the ‘excesses’ of capitalism, such as ‘speculation’ or ‘usury’. Such occasional expressions of ‘anti-capitalist’ (to be precise: anti finance-capital and anti-‘speculation’) sentiments were not untypical for German liberals of the time.

Treitschke praised the *Code Napoléon* and the anti-feudal orientation of Napoléon I. (ibid.:211) while he described the ideas of the revolution of 1789 as ‘an obscure chaos of despotic and liberal thoughts that exclude each other’<sup>300</sup> (ibid.:212f). Treitschke attacked egalitarianism and the notion of popular sovereignty together with the ‘all-powerfulness (Allmacht) of the state’ and the – typically French – desire for ‘unconditional unity and centralisation’ (ibid.:213). He argued that under Louis Philippe (1830-1848) when for the first time in a European country the middle classes gained ‘complete possession of ordered government’ (quoted ibid.:223) they missed the chance to ‘reconcile old and new propertied classes’ and showed the same ‘class egotism (ständische Selbstsucht)’ that the aristocracy had previously shown. They turned France into ‘a nation of careerists’. Treitschke acknowledged that Louis Napoléon recognised and tried to address the destitution of the working class. However, ‘even this coldly calculating mind falls for the perennial delusion of all absolutists, as if the education to freedom was possible other than through freedom itself’ (quoted ibid.). The revolution of 1848, however, showed that ‘nobody is less democratic than the masses’ (quoted ibid.:227). He relates the extreme violence of modern French history to the expulsion of ‘the Protestant faith’ and the ‘moderate freedom’ that it offers (ibid.:232). He praises the efforts made by Napoleon III to raise the educational level of the workers and for their ‘civil improvement (bürgerliche Verbesserung)’ (ibid.:239). However, he asserts that ‘not even the magic tricks of monarchic socialism managed to reconcile capital and labour’

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<sup>300</sup> In his five-part essay on ‘Bonapartism’ (published between 1865 and 1868).

(ibid.:240). For Treitschke the conflict of capital and labour cannot be reconciled by social (state-socialist) policies. He supports only such carefully chosen measures that promise to weaken the class-consciousness of workers (such as turning them into house-owners).

When in December 1871 Heinrich Bernhard Oppenheim attacked criticisms of Manchester style liberalism from one of the bourgeois proponents of social reform<sup>301</sup> – for whom Oppenheimer on this occasion coined the term *Kathedersozialisten* – Treitschke supported the social reform option rather than the Manchester position (ibid.:275).<sup>302</sup> Treitschke also signed the invitation to a meeting in the summer of 1872 that resulted in the foundation of the '*Verein für Sozialpolitik*'.<sup>303</sup> Nevertheless, Treitschke made a fiercely polemical statement *against* attempts at social reform in reaction to a speech by Schmoller from March 1874 ('Der Sozialismus und seine Gönner').<sup>304</sup>

Treitschke agreed with Schmoller that social reform was unavoidable in order to prevent revolution, and that the state was 'the most magnificent moral (sittliche) institution for the education of humanity (Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts)' (a formulation Schmoller had used in 1872, quoted in Langer 1998:277). Treitschke's disagreement was with Schmoller's suggestion that 'the origin of social classes and, more generally, of history was force (Gewalt)'. For Treitschke the existence of classes was an anthropological universal: 'The millions must plow, forge and plane for some thousands to be able to study, paint and govern' (ibid.:279).<sup>305</sup> For Treitschke, 'marriage, property and the organic subdivision (Gliederung) of society' were the foundation of society *sans phrase*. The struggles between unequal social groups was what history was all about – but for Treitschke classes pre-existed, were not formed by struggle and violence.

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<sup>301</sup> Gustav Schönberg

<sup>302</sup> Langer argues this with reference to a letter by Treitschke to Gustav von Schmoller.

<sup>303</sup> However, he did not take part in the meeting, apparently because of his deafness.

<sup>304</sup> Both Schmoller's speech and Treitschke's polemic were published in *Preussische Jahrbücher*.

<sup>305</sup> These famous words are 'often condemned. But moral indignation does not alter the facts of the history of civilizations' (Megay 1958:310f). Treitschke's words were (as so often) particularly catchy, but the idea was anything but new. Turgot for example also recognized that 'inequality is necessary to the development of division of labor and commerce, and therefore to all the social benefits which modern Europe enjoyed through them' (Comninel 1987:69). Treitschke repeated a point that classical political economy had not have hesitations to make at a point in time when mass literacy made it advisable for bourgeois theorists to formulate more carefully.

Cultural '*Gleichmacherei*' seemed to Treitschke particularly dangerous since universal suffrage opened the perspective of 'democracy' which spelt the 'political de-moralization of the masses (politische Entsittlichung des Haufens)'. Treitschke emphasised – against what he saw as the *Kathedersozialisten*'s naivety – the danger that *too much* reform would dissolve bourgeois society into anarchy (i.e not-society, a not-human state of things).

Treitschke was clearly aware of the difficulty of navigating liberal society between the *Scylla* of 'too little reform' and the *Charybdis* of 'too much reform'. He based his hopes on achieving this tightrope act on the particular nature of the German bourgeoisie, which he contrasted favourably to its French counterpart: while the latter is egotistic and greedy by nature, the German bourgeoisie has only occasionally succumbed to the 'temptations of an epoch of feverish speculation' (ibid.:283) – and even these rare cases cannot be blamed on the properly *German* bourgeoisie:

Many new fortunes have been made, amassed by dirty hands using immoral means, and in some parts of the press the greed of these circles shows itself in its ugly triviality as the Shylock-character of the worse elements of our Jewry (ibid.).

Because the *German bourgeoisie* is less capitalist-minded than the *French bourgeoisie*, there is hope that the former will be able to maintain bourgeois society with only a *modest amount* of reform – under the condition, however, that the Jews whose negative influence aggravates the social problem are being kept in check. This is how Treitschke's understanding of the precarious and contradictory nature of bourgeois capitalist society provides the framework that gives urgency to 'the Jewish question'.

#### 1.4.2 Staat, Freiheit, Sittlichkeit

Treitschke advocated 'the liberty of man within the liberal state (die Freiheit des Menschen im freien Staate)' (Langer 1998:183). 'Man' can act *as a man* only *as a citizen*, i.e. in the framework of the state. Decisive is not the morality of the individual (*Moralität*) but the morality as mediated by the state (*Sittlichkeit*, the synthesis of subjective and objective morality) (Megay 1958:305). Full development of human personality is only possible *in* the state – following Hegel

– not *against* the state (as Treitschke felt that ‘deformed’ liberalism *à la* Humboldt and Mill suggested).

The ways Treitschke conceived of the relation between state, nation, society and individual are less than coherent. His reasoning can best be described as a de-dialecticized reading of the Hegelian conception<sup>306</sup> in which each single element stands next to all the others in its own right rather unmediated.

Treitschke rejects the utilitarian concept of the state as a mere means for achieving the interests of individuals. He holds that the totality of society (‘Gesammdasein’) is of higher value than the ‘free movement’ of the individuals (ibid.:106).<sup>307</sup> However, he also argues for the ‘mutuality of rights and duties’ between citizens and the state whereby *both* the state and the citizens carry rights and duties. The state ‘is its own purpose (sich selbst Zweck) like everything

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<sup>306</sup> Treitschke saw the state simultaneously as the political form of the ‘Volk’ (people/nation) and as the unified and structured bourgeois/civil (bürgerliche) society (the sphere of particular and conflicting interests). Treitschke vaguely reflected the mutual dependence of nation, state and society and held that the state’s interventions into nation and society needed to be limited. Relying on Hegel’s account, the forming of civil society is impossible unless straight away organized in the form of the state, which is defined as ‘the people united under law’, or else as ‘civil society homogeneously organized’ (Megay 1958:308f). Civil society abstracted from the state is for Treitschke just that: an abstraction. However, Treitschke falls back behind Hegel when he employs a vulgar nominalism to *civil society*, and fetishizes, or reifies, the *state*. A crucial difference between Hegel’s conception and the version presented by Treitschke is the latter’s failure to think the concept of state and civil society *dialectically*. Treitschke on the one hand (in keeping with the teachings of the historical school of law and economics) ‘explained political and legal institutions as a reflection of the power relations existing among the more important societal forces’, but on the other hand introduced ‘the state (the actualization of universality and concrete morality) from the outside as an agent with inherent power to bring order and justice into the chaos of civil society’. Treitschke ‘was never able to eliminate this dichotomy between society and state’ which ‘also mars his view of man as an individual person and as a citizen’ (ibid.:309). Megay holds that for Hegel, ‘the essence of the modern state’ was that ‘the universal is united with the full freedom of particularity ... which must retain its right’. While the strength of the dialectical conception of state, civil society and individual would lie in its keeping open the tension – the ‘force field’ – between its contradicting terms, Treitschke maintained ‘an uneasy symbiosis of the essentially antithetical concepts’ (ibid.:310).

Iggers adds that Treitschke’s notion of the state as an ‘ethical force that draws together the nation on a higher level’ only superficially resembles Hegel’s conception because it lacks the essential idea that the state ‘in its development as well as structure is reasonable’ (Iggers 1971:67). The idea that the state is an ‘ethical personality’ is for Treitschke just another way of saying that it is *not* subject to universal norms and values. Iggers emphasizes that this concept only *appears* idealist, while actually it is a form of positivism, irrationalism and value-relativism (ibid.:78).

<sup>307</sup> This quote is from ‘Liberty (Die Freiheit)’ (1861) which is partly a review of John Stuart Mill’s ‘On Liberty’ (1859). Treitschke rejects Mill’s utilitarianism but acknowledges Mill’s indebtedness to German idealism and presents large parts of Mill’s argument as support for his own. Langer writes that in the revised version of the text from 1864, the emphasis shifted more towards the state. In the first version Treitschke had written (in a Kantian vein) that ‘the citizen must never be used by the state as a mere means to an end’ and ‘the personal well-being of the citizen is the touchstone for the dignity of the state’, while both statements were not contained in the second version (ibid.).

living'; the state 'leads an actual life just like each citizen does' (quoted *ibid.*).<sup>308</sup> On another occasion, Treitschke rejected what he saw as Hegel's deification of the state and defended (as he believed, against Hegel) the independent force of conscience of the individual (introduced by Christianity into world history).<sup>309</sup> In the context of the *Kulturkampf* Treitschke wrote that the state was also 'a cultural force (Culturmacht) which we expect to make constructive contributions to all spheres of national life' (*ibid.*:257). He maintained – against the US-American model in which churches are private associations totally separate from the state – that churches should be publicly supported and, by the same token, publicly controlled. He also argued that the state as the creator of order is necessary for bridging the particular interests of the groups that make up society (*ibid.*:155).<sup>310</sup> Treitschke argued that 'the ultimate legal basis of the state' is the 'ethical consciousness of the nation (sittliche Bewusstsein des Volkes)' (*ibid.*:179), and that 'the state is not the enemy of the citizen' (*ibid.*:107). At the same time, he feared egalitarianism and 'dictatorship of mediocrity' and applauded Mill's demand the individual need be protected against 'the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling' (Mill 1976:68).<sup>311</sup> 'The love of the German for individual freedom' combined with a strong sense of toleration were for Treitschke the specific features that characterised the emerging German nation state (Langer 1998:181). One of its supreme tasks ought to be to fight off the threat by uniform mass civilisation.

<sup>308</sup> The last quote is from the revised version of 1864.

<sup>309</sup> This is from a chapter on Hegel in the third volume of 'German History' (1885). Treitschke also wrote that Hegelianism presaged an intellectual iconoclasm and lack of modesty that he otherwise characterized as Jewish and French.

<sup>310</sup> This quote is from his 'Social Science, A critical essay' (Die Gesellschaftswissenschaft. Ein kritischer Versuch) of 1858.

<sup>311</sup> Treitschke accepted Mill's statement that 'mankind' is only 'warranted ... in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number' for the sole purpose of 'self-protection' (Mill 1976:72f) but found it too unspecific because Mill failed to provide the criteria by which to judge when a case for self-protection could be made. He concluded that 'there is no absolute limit to state power' but there are only *relative*, i.e. historically specific limits. The limit of state power was the acceptance on the side of the citizens that they felt their own agency to be respected by the state's and that they were not being used in a merely instrumental way.

### 1.4.3 National unification and liberal constitution

For Treitschke, liberty remains a mere phrase ‘as long as no nation exists’, because the nation ‘is the only basis of any development of the state’, and liberty is possible only in the state (quoted from a text of 1854, in Krieger 1957:366).<sup>312</sup> Whichever path leads fastest to nation-building and state-formation is the best, ‘even despotism’, because ‘once national unity is achieved, any unnatural constitutional form will not last’ (quoted from a letter from Treitschke’s student days; Langer 1998:78). National unity automatically leads to (constitutional) freedom, while (constitutional) freedom not based on national unity is mere illusion.

Treitschke embraced a pro-Prussian attitude because Prussia had (comparatively speaking) most liberties amongst all German states. He held that all other principalities ‘can be called states only in a daringly metaphorical way of speaking’ (quoted *ibid.*:84). Prussia – since the reform period – qualifies as an ‘ethical’ state in the Hegelian sense.<sup>313</sup> In a letter written in 1860, Treitschke outlined his view of what had to be done:

...driving out the dynasties, annexation by Prussia ... Who believes this could be done peacefully? But is not German unification under Emperor Wilhelm I an idea worth a few hundred thousand lives? (*ibid.*:85).<sup>314</sup>

Treitschke had no sympathies for defenders of the dynastic rights of the princely rulers of any semi-feudal, absolutist realm such as Schleswig-Holstein. If the power that had constituted those rights in the first place had ceased to exist, or stood in the way of progress, those rights were void. Treitschke rejected scruples in destroying the old principalities because ‘the ball is rolling, not even a God could stop its course now’. The ‘train of history (Zug der Geschichte)’ necessitated the ‘unification of large national masses’ which Treitschke expected

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<sup>312</sup> In a lecture on Fichte given in 1862 (published in ‘Die Grenzboten’), Treitschke quotes approvingly Fichte’s statement that ‘in Germany there will arise a true Empire of Right (Reich des Rechts) and of personal freedom, based on the equality of all human beings’ (Langer 1998:91)

<sup>313</sup> Treitschke came from a patriotic Saxonian (and rather anti-Prussian) family, i.e. he acted not out of a received Prussian patriotism or chauvinism.

<sup>314</sup> National Liberals tended to be rather casual in relation to war (different for example from Kant). Treitschke applauded Fichte’s and Hegel’s understanding of the necessity and benefits of war: ‘The concept of war is inherent in the concept of the state, because the essence of the state is power (Mit dem Begriffe des Staats ist der Begriff des Krieges schon gegeben, denn das Wesen des Staats liegt in der Macht) ... without weapons against those who disturb the inner order and against the foreign enemy no state can exist’ (*ibid.*:139).



would also replace provincial narrow-mindedness with the 'moral improvement' (ibid.:123) that characterizes the citizens of large nation states. After the Prussian victory over Austria in July 1866, Treitschke commented that the smaller states were now 'more than ripe for the deserved destruction' (ibid.:122). Now was the time to attach 'the soft mass of statelets (die weiche Masse der Kleinstaaten)' to Prussia 'in its rough greatness, its strength and brusqueness as a hard core (mit all' seiner rauhen Grösse, seiner Härte und Schroffheit als einen festen Kern)' (ibid.:120).<sup>315</sup>

Only the nation state can guarantee true civilization and world peace (ibid.:125), and political liberalism needed to 'have the courage' to support Prussia in destroying the widely hated *Kleinstaaterei* (ibid.:124). Since at the same time, unification had to be achieved at the exclusion of what liberalism had always considered its main enemy, Habsburg Austria, it had to be carried out by a lesser enemy of liberalism – the Prussian state.<sup>316</sup>

Treitschke welcomed that the liberal movement had managed after 1848 to free itself from its 'naïve' trust on the reformability of absolutism. *Gotha* liberalism (that had successfully integrated some democrats) differed clearly from the cautious and moderate old-fashioned *Beamtenliberalismus*.<sup>317</sup>

Nevertheless, Treitschke opposed the careful reformism of German monarchical thinking to Rousseau's concept of popular sovereignty which in his

<sup>315</sup> This rhetoric anticipates the type of 'male fantasies' that Theweleit (1987, 1989) describes.

<sup>316</sup> From a liberal position, seeing the evolution of nation-states as an element of liberal progress, there is indeed no good reason to shed any tears about the destruction of Saxonian or Hanoverian princely semi-feudalism; Langer calls Treitschke's attitude correctly 'idealistic realism' (ibid.). When some critics of the annexation of Schleswig-Holstein argued it should be up to the population whether they wanted to be a Prussian province, Treitschke stated that the right to self-determination should not be over-emphasized: asking the population for its opinion leads to 'anarchy', and liberals who abhor universal suffrage as an 'instrument of Caesarism' (ibid.:112) should not at the same time call for referendums.

The National-Liberal pattern of thought is strikingly contemporary: we don't like war, and we don't even doubt that the motives of the states that are starting it (against existing inter-state law) are egotistic and narrow self-interest, but we still support it because we – due to our superior insight – understand that the *weltgeist* (liberal progress) merely *uses* the egotism of the warmongers for the higher purpose of advancing liberal democracy (in the same way that it uses the egotism of the baker to provide society with the finest quality bread). Therefore we have to allow the superpower of the day to destroy all those petty evil dictators (formerly known as dynastic absolutist semi-feudal princes) in the name of long-term progress. Once sweet (free market) commerce is restored to its naturally rightful might (by any means necessary, even if they look ugly) the political small print (national self-determination, democracy, human rights) will follow inevitably and of their own accord.

<sup>317</sup> Occasionally Treitschke would – at that time – criticise more cautious fellow liberals (such as Haym, then editor of the *Preussische Jahrbücher*) for not opposing a censorship law such as the one imposed by the Prussian King in 1863 (ibid.:98).

view led necessarily to anarchy and despotism (ibid.:136).<sup>318</sup> One element of 'Altliberalismus' that Treitschke never abandoned was the rejection of universal suffrage and the view of the *Beamtentum* as the truly 'governing (regierende) class' (Langer:338). National monarchy was necessary to counterbalance the tendency of parliamentarians to represent the interests of the propertied classes (ibid.:140), as well as preventing a tyranny of the majority and the possibility of 'socialisme autoritaire' (ibid.:141).

Like the majority of liberals<sup>319</sup> – and, in the course of the war of 1870/71, the general public<sup>320</sup> – Treitschke advocated (already before the war) the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine (ibid.:146). Treitschke wrote in 1870 that the Alsatians could not possibly know 'what is good for them' because they had to live under despotic French cultural influence; the German state should 'return to them their own self against their own will' (ibid.:147). Their German features would soon be re-animated by 'nature itself, the voice of the blood'. He did not fail to mention, however, also the economic benefits of annexation (ibid.:148).

When Treitschke left the National-Liberal party (July 1879), he argued that the terms 'liberal' and 'conservative' had lost their meaning. They were indeed

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<sup>318</sup> Treitschke argued that English parliamentarianism was viable only thanks to the existence of a strong, talented and self-governed aristocracy that enjoyed popular trust. It did not provide a 'model' that could be transferred to other countries with different social and historical conditions: 'Because our society is more democratic than English society, our government needs to be truly monarchic'. Treitschke rejected those elements of the liberal tradition that he understands to be French (representative democracy and centralized state government) and admired English 'aristocratic' institutions of 'self-government' (Iggers 1971:69). Treitschke argued that Germany's ruling class was not the aristocracy but the *Beamtentum*. Nevertheless, Treitschke holds that the English and the Germans share the concept of liberty as 'the unlimited right of the personality' (Mill according to Treitschke) that differed from the French (democratic) idea of liberty.

Treitschke considered natural-law liberalism (as prevalent in the south German states) to be an effect of the 'French deformation of liberalism' and 'the smug old Enlightenment' that filtered across the border into Germany (Langer 1998:369) and was popularized by 'international Jewry'. England provided hypocrisy and trade-mindedness and is labelled by Treitschke (in the fifth volume of 'German History' [1894]) the 'new Carthage' (ibid.:371). For the anti-Semitic overtones of this notion cp. Bernal (1991:341f): Phoenician is a Semitic language. An affinity between Carthage and England was seen by many in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on both sides of the Channel. 'Many Victorians had a positive feeling towards the Phoenicians as sober cloth merchants who did a little bit of slaving on the side and spread civilization while making a tidy profit' (ibid.:350).

Treitschke had adopted methodical 'realism' (Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann) that claimed the principles of politics be deduced from an historical account of the political and social circumstances of any given country already in the first half of the 1850s (Langer 1998:71).

<sup>319</sup> Ludwig Bamberger was also a supporter, for example, while Bismarck seems to have been rather reserved about the idea.

<sup>320</sup> Respect for the 'popular sovereignty' of the Alsatians had not even in the democratic press been unanimously demanded.

becoming increasingly blurred in the course of the 1880s (Dorpalen 1957:251). Supra-party organizations such as students associations or pressure groups realized precisely the kind of conservative-liberal rapprochement ('on the model of the Victorian Compromise') that Treitschke began to advocate for party politics. Furthermore, there was 'the solid foundation of parallel economic interests' of agrarians and industrialists. Treitschke sensed correctly the winds of change. By any means, the remaining forces of classical liberalism were wiped out of German politics not by anti-Semitism or cultural illiberalism but because the liberals' opposition to Bismarck's social security scheme and their 'identification with the free-trading interests of the numerically small commercial and handicraft groups' left them without a chance in parliamentary politics (ibid.). As Treitschke formulated, 'the living forces of history had passed them by' (ibid.). The widely held notion that Treitschke first was, and then from some point (e.g. 1866) stopped being a liberal has to be treated with caution. In many respects there has not been a significant break in Treitschke's intellectual development, although a radicalisation of Treitschke's nationalism and an increase in straightforwardly racial motives can be discerned (Langer 1998:377). Langer concludes that Treitschke was probably a 'typical German liberal of the 1860s', while the Treitschke of the 1870s was less clearly middle of the road but neither a complete outsider (380; 382; 384). Hans Herzfeld (1923) – drawing on Friedrich Meinecke (1922) – saw Treitschke as a representative of 'classic liberalism' aiming at 'a synthesis of previous German idealism and historical-political experience' (quoted in Langer 1998:5). Herzfeld characterised Treitschke after his turn towards admiring Bismarck as a 'liberal Tory'. The anti-democratic features of Treitschke's individualism are rooted in his conscious opposition to what he saw (and abhorred) as the 'atomism' inherent in natural-law liberalism. Ruggiero concludes in a similar vein:

Treitschke's political conception ... represents a form of Liberalism doubtless in many respects at variance with Western Liberalism, but at bottom inspired by the same motives, and equally tending to find in the autonomous personality the source of a rich and varied political life (Ruggiero 1981:264).<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> For brief characterizations of the other contributors to the *Streit* see *Appendix 4.2*.



## 2. The 'Berliner Antisemitismusstreit'

### 2.1 Outline of Treitschke's first article

The starting point of the *Streit* was the concluding section of a review of current political affairs in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* (November 1879) which Treitschke edited. This text – actually quite short and rather casually formulated – set the topics that would subsequently be unfolded into the much more detailed and sophisticated arguments that constitute the *Streit*.<sup>322</sup>

The succession of arguments in Treitschke's first contribution (Treitschke 1896a) is as follows:

1. Treitschke observes the current anti-liberal mood of the public – described as frightening – and argues that the noisy phenomena on the surface have to be explained in terms of what goes on 'in the depths' of 'the nation's life'. Treitschke claims that the liberal press is out of touch with society. The current social process is in its essence an adverse reflection on 'humanity and Enlightenment', implying a return from skepticism to 'moral groundedness' and 'religious earnestness'. Treitschke welcomes this trend but also stresses that religion ought not to interfere with 'the positive right of the secular state'. The awakening of the national consciousness is directed against 'effeminate philanthropy' and aims at restoring the 'majesty of the law' as well as its execution (Treitschke 1896a:19-21).
2. The new anti-Jewish movement is appreciated as one of the 'symptoms' of this overall, anti-liberal current. It represents an ugly but welcome liberation from the liberal anti-anti-Judaism of the preceding decade; it is seen as coming from 'the people' and being directed against the 'authoritative' discourse of the liberal-intellectual-Jewish establishment. The Jews, the press and, more generally, liberalism are to be blamed for having caused the popular irritation, which it is implied could dangerously get out of hand. While earlier forms of 'Jew-baiting' had been 'hollow and irrational', however, at the bottom of the current 'noisy activity' lies 'long suppressed

anger' that is genuine and legitimate. It reflects the emergence of 'a German Jewish question' ('eine deutsche Judenfrage') (ibid.:21f).

3. Treitschke argues that the German situation is essentially different from that in 'Western' countries such as England and France. At this step of the argument, Treitschke names mass immigration of Polish Jews as the decisive difference. While the 'Spanish Jews' who came to the Western countries tended to assimilate easier, the 'Polish Jews' who are immigrating into Germany are unable to assimilate (ibid.:22f).
4. Treitschke's central demand in this text is for assimilation: the Jews shall 'become Germans' which means in the first instance to 'regard themselves' as Germans, irrespective of their religion. However, he makes this demand on the grounds that 'Germanic civilization' must remain unmixed. The conflict between the concern for an 'unspoiled' Germanic civilization and the demand for political assimilation irrespective of religion remains unresolved throughout the text, although the concept of a 'German spirit' that the Jews are asked to adopt seems to be an attempt to bridge the self-contradictory conception. Treitschke expresses doubts about whether many Jews actually *want* to become Germans. Treitschke reverses the Enlightenment expectation that legal emancipation will inevitably lead to assimilation and suggests that 'Jewish arrogance' is a recent i.e. *post-emancipation* phenomenon. As evidence he points to Jewish academic and business involvement which he argues is changing the traditional character of German economy and also of 'German spirit'. He develops at length the theme of 'Jewish domination of the press'. He accuses Börne in particular of mocking Germany 'as if' he *was not* a member of the nation – implying that he actually *is* and ought to act accordingly. This seems to reflect Treitschke's overriding concern with every citizen's unequivocal identification with nation and state. He then goes on to characterize the German nation as a *Christian nation*, leaving unclear how or to what extent the Jewish citizens ought to identify themselves with the Christian German nation (ibid.:23-26).
5. Treitschke urges the reader to take seriously the anti-Jewish movement and warns against underestimating it as a transitory mood of the mob and a few

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<sup>322</sup> For the contents of the whole article 'Our prospects', see *chapter 2.2.5.1*. For a complete translation of the section presented here see appendix, 4.1.

fanatics. He emphasizes that some of the 'best educated' men share the anti-Jewish feeling, suggesting only indirectly that this may include himself. He points out that the current anti-Jewish movement is grounded neither in mere 'Christian fanaticism' nor in 'national arrogance' (ibid.:26f).

6. In the concluding paragraphs Treitschke rejects the idea of revoking legal emancipation which he argues would mean a betrayal of the 'fine traditions' of the (liberal, secular) state. However, he argues that the weakness of the German nation (as compared to France and England) necessitates a *specifically German* unequivocal stance on the Jews. Pointing to France and England as examples, he suggests that stronger German national consciousness will create a context in which Jews will be 'harmless' or 'even beneficial'. The main thrust of his argument includes two demands: the Germans shall become more conscious and proud of their nationality, and the Jews shall become more German. To the extent that assimilation can never be complete, Treitschke argues that the minority should accept the dominating role of the majority without criticism of or intervention in 'their' business and show 'tact' and 'tolerance' (ibid.:27f).

The impression of a first reading of the text is that of a basically liberal argument shot through with anti-liberal undercurrents. However, this is a notoriously difficult and evasive document. The illiberal and even 'racist' elements in a text that seems predominantly a call to accelerated assimilation begs explanation. In the following chapters the unfolding of the debate along its thematic strands aims to bring out the contradictions both within Treitschke's 'illiberal' liberalism and what others have responded to it, as well as how both relate to each other. This process of working through the text material will lead to a set of questions about the nature of the relation of liberal state, bourgeois society and anti-Semitism, and processes of exclusion and domination more generally. These will be discussed in *Part Three*.

## 2.2 A structured presentation of the main strands of the argument

### 2.2.1 Origin, extent and meaning of the current anti-Jewish campaign

#### 2.2.1.1 TREITSCHKE'S REFORMULATION OF JEW-HATRED

Two thirds of Treitschke's article 'Our prospects' are a comment on foreign affairs (see 2.2.5.1) which ends with Treitschke's thoughts on the relationship between Germany and Austria-Hungary. Treitschke asserts his *kleindeutsche* position that the integrative and internationally stabilizing function of the 'Dual Monarchy' is more in the interest of the German *Reich* than the *grossdeutsche* perspective (that would include a policy of destabilizing Austria-Hungary and aiming to annexe its German speaking parts). Treitschke argues that the prospect of Austrian-Hungarian disintegration is threatening and creates a general 'feeling of insecurity' (Treitschke 1896a:18). This diagnosis of the international context leads Treitschke to his discourse on domestic affairs, starting with an analysis of the recent elections to the Prussian Diet:

In such a situation we need most of all strong government, loyal harmony (treue Eintracht) between crown and people. The Prussian electorate has understood this necessity. We want peace with the government – this was the message of the recent polls. The ranks of the conservative parties in the [Prussian] diet have been reinforced not by artificial pressure from above but through the voters' free will. The conservative current in the people is even stronger than the election results make it appear to be: some liberal deputies had their mandate confirmed only due to personal respect or old habit or as well because of the difficulties that a new party or grouping faces in the constituency. The nation is disgusted and fed up with the quarrelling of her parliaments; even the majority of the opponents of the new economic policy seem determined to wait for the effects of the reforms and to judge the facts. The *Fortschrittspartei* finds itself limited to some big cities and a few dispersed boroughs. The voters have mercilessly cleared out (räumten auf) the National-Liberal faction. ... The people does not want anymore to be spoon-fed by coteries (das Volk will sich nicht mehr von Coterien gängeln lassen) (ibid.:18f).

Treitschke concludes that the Prussian elections have 'strengthened the central power (Reichsgewalt)' over against the particular states. Treitschke's argument is that because of the looming insecurities of the international context, the German state needs unity and a powerful, centralised government, and for this purpose it



is necessary to end the 'quarrelling' in the parliaments caused by the dated doctrines of 'old school' liberals and radical progressives. Because 'the people' seem to understand this necessity, the formula for the future lies in a 'loyal harmony' between 'crown and people'.

Here follow the notorious nine pages that begin with 'meanwhile (unterdessen)'. Treitschke draws a general picture of the mood prevalent in Germany at the time – apparently he had just returned from a six week long trip to Italy.<sup>323</sup>

Meanwhile a miraculous and powerful excitement labors in the depths of our national life. It is as if the nation reflected on itself, as if it judged itself harshly (Treitschke 1896:19).<sup>324</sup>

The returning Treitschke 'is almost frightened' by the 'awakening of the national conscience' (Erwachen des Volksgewissens), manifested in a thousand voices 'that defend or indict each other' (die sich unter einander entschuldigen oder verklagen). Treitschke attributes to this process additional importance and authenticity by claiming that this happens 'almost entirely independently from the press'. He suggests that 'the press' is, as in the 1860s, 'still' dominated by 'liberal wish lists' and the 'naïve belief in the unfailing moral force of "education" ("Bildung")'. Different from 'the majority of the German press', 'public opinion' manifests an anti-liberal popular mood coming from 'the depths of our folk-life'.

Economic hardship, the recollection of so many disappointed hopes and of the sins of the 'Gründerzeiten', the sight of the increasing degeneration (Verwilderung) of the masses, which keeps pace with the spreading of the secret arts of reading and writing, and last but not least, the recollection of those days of horror in spring 1878<sup>325</sup> – all this forced thousands to reflect on the value of our humanity and Enlightenment. Thousands feel that due

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<sup>323</sup> There he had found confirmed his view of the 'deep necessity of Christianity', and had also been able to make anthropological observations such as that Romance and Slavonic people do not have hip bones 'which remain the privilege of the Germanic peoples' (Boehlich 1965b:240, quoting a letter Treitschke's to his wife). Having spent 'the last couple of months abroad' Treitschke implicitly claims to be in a position to observe 'the stormy German world' more objectively. Treitschke reinforces the authority-enhancing effect by referring to himself in the third person: '... he who, like the writer of these lines, has spent the last couple of months abroad and now suddenly ....'.

<sup>324</sup> 'Unterdessen arbeitet in den Tiefen unseres Volkslebens eine wunderbare, mächtige Erregung. Es ist als ob die Nation sich auf sich selber besänne, unbarmherzig mit sich in's Gericht ginge.'

<sup>325</sup> Treitschke alludes here to the attempts on the life of the *Kaiser*.

to educational conceit we risk forgetting completely the moral ground of human life<sup>326</sup> (ibid.:20).

After the attacks on liberalism and ‘the press’ Treitschke evokes a popular sentiment against ‘Bildung’, slandered as ‘Bildungsdünkel’ (educational conceit) that is bound to give up on Enlightenment and ‘humanity’ and returns to questions of ‘moral ground (sittlichen Halt)’ – implying that Enlightenment and talk about ‘humanity’ do not provide, but rather erode ‘sittlichen Halt’. Treitschke argues not against ‘Bildung’ as such but against the *generalization* of ‘Bildung’ which he links to social ‘degeneration’.

Treitschke paints a picture of a society divided in two groups: one group of those who ‘fall for arid scepticism’ (verfallen einem wüsten Unglauben), opposed to another group in whom ‘religious earnestness, the ecclesiastical sense (der kirchliche Sinn)’ have ‘gained strength again’. This generic suggestion leads Treitschke to comment on a specific event, the Protestant *General Synod*. He introduces on this occasion his thoughts on a theme that will remain central to his argument: the interrelation of *religion* and *the state*. Treitschke gives an ambivalent assessment of the synod. He applauds the way it has shown ‘even to the opponents’ ‘that this church still lives, that it is still an effective force (wirksame Macht), firmly rooted in the people (Volk), full of moral gravity (sittliche Ernst) and not at all lacking in spiritual powers (geistigen Kräften)’. On the other hand, he criticizes ‘some unpleasant resolutions’ including the ‘hopefully unfeasible attempt to subject the theological faculties [of the universities] to ecclesiastical rule (kirchliche Parteiherrschaft)’. These resolutions were accompanied by ‘some ugly zealous words’ and betrayed ‘the old theologians’ sin, the indifference towards the positive right of the secular state’ (das positive Recht des weltlichen Staates). Two of Treitschke’s key concepts, the ‘positive right of the state’ and the ‘moral gravity’ of (Protestant) religiosity, are introduced standing in a relation of tension to each other. It is significant that in the introduction of that section of the text that is mainly about the position of *Jewry* in the national state and society, Treitschke reflects on the relationship between the secular state and the (Protestant) *church*. The state depends on the church to provide vital ethical underpinnings that complement the secular state,

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<sup>326</sup> ‘... ueber unserem Bildungsduenkel den sittlichen Halt des Menschenlebens ganz zu vergessen’.

while the state also finds its authority challenged in the field of education – a field that is crucial to the process of nation-building. Treitschke applauds the ‘religious gravity’ of the Protestant synod, but rejects its challenge to the authority of the state.

Treitschke then returns to his observations on the popular mood that were the starting point of the essay, paraphrased here as ‘the awakened conscience of the people’ (*das erwachte Gewissen des Volkes*) that is directed ‘mainly against the effeminate philanthropy (*weichliche Philanthropie*) of our age’, a remark that takes up again his attacks on liberalism and humanism. This is followed by the discussion of the recent publication of Otto Mittelstaedt’s text ‘Against prison sentences’ (1879),<sup>327</sup> which Treitschke describes as ‘a powerful protest against that pampering and mollicoddling (*Verhättschelung* and *Verzärtelung*) of criminals which has overcrowded our prisons and has become a cruel insult (*Grausamkeit*) to the decent people (*rechtschaffene Leute*)’ (*ibid.*:20f). Treitschke asserts that ‘this strictly objective publication’ has been answered by ‘incensed meetings and harsh resolutions of contempt from the radical parties’ because

the heroes of the philanthropic phrase silently feel that the brave author - although his particular statements can often be criticized – essentially pronounces only what hundreds of thousands are thinking. ... The whole spirit of the age urges that the most severe majesty of right be fully restored in our laws and their execution.<sup>328</sup>

Treitschke does not give any evidence for his claim that Mittelstaedt’s anti-liberalism reflects a popular, anti-liberal mood.

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<sup>327</sup> Mittelstaedt rejects in his pamphlet ‘Gegen die Freiheitsstrafen. Ein Beitrag zur Kritik des heutigen Strafsystems, *Pro Libertate!*’ (apparently based on his practical experience as a judge in Hamburg) the ideas that underlie 19<sup>th</sup> century reforms of the justice system. He asserts that punishment ought not to be misrepresented as an educational act that is aimed to better the delinquent. In the absence of general religious consciousness (which he does not deplore) only strict assertion of an ethical ‘categorical imperative’ (Mittelstaedt 1879:26;29) can warrant social order: punishment ought to be understood as ‘Strafübel’ that creates justice, deters and neutralizes (*Unschädlichmachung*), not as ‘forced education (*Zwangserziehung*)’ (*ibid.*:27;71). The justice system ‘cannot and ought not to be educational’ (*ibid.*:61). He rejects the idea that forced labour in prison was ‘educational’ as a liberal delusion and asserts that it is merely meant to intensify the punishment (*ibid.*:39). He also argues the state should not exclude the use of death penalty (*ibid.*:75), deportation (*ibid.*:77) and corporeal punishment (*ibid.*:81). He argues that prison confinement is also an infliction of corporeal suffering that can be worse than corporeal punishment which to deny he denounces as liberal bigotry (*ibid.*).

<sup>328</sup> ‘Der ganze Zug der Zeit drängt dahin, dass die unerbittlich strenge Majestät des Rechts in unseren Gesetzen wie in ihrer Handhabung wieder zur vollen Anerkennung gelangen muss.’ Treitschke had already in 1870 argued for death penalty (Langer 1998:144).

Treitschke's concerns with the resurgence of religious sentiment and with law and its enforcement provide the context for the discussion of anti-Semitism, which is referred to for the first time in the following paragraph:

Among the symptoms of the deep change of mood that goes through our people (Volk) none appears as disconcerting (befremdend) as the passionate movement against Jewry (gegen das Judentum)<sup>329</sup> (ibid.:21).

The anti-Semitic movement is introduced by Treitschke as only one out of a number of 'symptoms', which relativizes its importance, but amongst this number it is introduced as the most 'disconcerting' one. The cautiously critical tone of this formulation is overruled, however, by the subsequent sentence, which contrasts anti-Semitic agitation with what Treitschke alleges the situation previously had been like:

Until a few months ago, the authoritative 'inverted Hep-Hep-call' was still dominant in Germany.

'Hep-Hep' is the notorious derogatory rallying cry against Jews especially associated with the anti-Jewish events of 1819. In the 1870s and 1880s it was quite common to liken any anti-Jewish tendencies to revivals of the earlier 'Hep-Hep'-riots. Treitschke reverses this common (liberal) topos and uses the tabooed term to stigmatize the (liberal) *critique* of anti-Semitism. By qualifying the liberal discourse as 'authoritative' (berufene) he reinforces his point that the change of mood in the 'Volk' represents an anti-authoritative, authentically *popular* movement. Treitschke's attack on the liberal discourse delegitimizes in advance liberal reproaches and allows Treitschke to express sympathies for the current 'movement' without appearing to be continuing the 'medieval barbarism' of Jew-baiting.<sup>330</sup>

Treitschke describes the established liberal discourse as follows:

About the national wrongs of the Germans, the French and all other nations, everybody could freely say the worst things; but if somebody dared to speak in just and moderate terms about some undeniable weakness

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<sup>329</sup> German words ending on *-tum* (or *-thum*) are ambivalent as to whether they refer to an abstract, spiritual or a concrete object: 'Judentum' can be 'the Jews' just as well as 'Judaism' or even a 'Jewish principle' of whatever sort. Anti-Jewish rhetoric seems to play on this semantic ambiguity. (Holz [2001:177-180] states that 'Judentum' only refers to an abstraction as opposed to 'the Jews'. Judging from Treitschke's use of the terminology, I do not find this convincing.)

<sup>330</sup> This point has been made by Hoffmann (1997:227) and Holz (2001:185).

of the Jewish character, he was immediately branded as a barbarian and religious persecutor by nearly all newspapers.

Treitschke invokes here an anonymous (German) collective of independent minds who wish to debate the weaknesses of all peoples, including their own and that of the Jews, but are kept in check by 'the press',<sup>331</sup> which allegedly suppressed any criticism of the Jews.

In the remainder of the same paragraph Treitschke enumerates recent events that outline the current anti-Semitic movement:

Today we have already come to the point where the majority of Breslau voters – apparently not in wild excitement but with quiet deliberation – conspired not to elect a Jew to the Diet under any circumstances. Anti-Semitic societies are formed, the 'Jewish question' is discussed in noisy meetings, a flood of anti-Semitic pamphlets inundates the market (ibid.:22).

Treitschke reverts to the tone he already adopted earlier. 'We have come to the point' seems to suggest that a basically legitimate reactive development is tending to go too far. Voters 'conspire', meetings are 'noisy', 'floods' of pamphlets 'inundate' the market. Treitschke uses negative terminology to express some distance from the events. At the same time, though, he stresses that the voters at least (perhaps in contrast to the 'passionate' movement) acted 'not in wild excitement but with quiet deliberation'. Taking into account that his main concern is with the 'positivity' of state and law (as expressed earlier), Treitschke's ambivalence about the processes seems to be more than just tactical: he perceives and articulates the risks for the 'positivity' of the authoritative state that lie in popular movements and the 'noise' and the 'floods' they cause. However, he implies that liberalism and the Jews are to blame for the fact that 'we have come to this point'. In turn, the social process is at least partly rational and legitimate.

Treitschke further elaborates on the twofold character of anti-Semitism:

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<sup>331</sup> The number of Jews involved in the publishing business was certainly higher than the Jewish share of the overall population (in Germany less than 1%), but the idea of its 'Jewish domination' is without grounding in reality. It might have seemed self-evident to Treitschke and his readers that if 'the press' – presented here as the arbiter of social discourse – defended 'the Jews' against anti-Semitism, this could have only been because of their statistical 'over-representation'. Anti-Semitism could thus in turn be implied to be an act of liberation from 'Jewish domination' – a perfectly circular argument.

There is only too much of dirt and brutality (Roheit) in these activities (in diesem Treiben), and it is impossible to suppress one's disgust when one notices that some of these incendiary pamphlets (Brandschriften) seem to come from Jewish pens. It is well known that since Pfefferkorn and Eisenmenger,<sup>332</sup> there were always many born Jews (geborenen Juden) among the fanatic Jew-haters (Judenfressern).

'Dirt and brutality', '*Treiben*' and '*Brandschriften*' add to the dissociating tone of the previous statement.<sup>333</sup> However, the (unsupported) claim that 'born Jews' (i.e. Jews converted to Christianity) are amongst the Jew-haters suggests that the Jews not only contributed *indirectly* to Jew-hatred by giving it a cause, but that some are even *directly* involved.<sup>334</sup> The Jews are the force behind liberalism as well as behind the (self-)destruction of liberalism, or, in other words, the self-destructive element of liberalism is identical with its Jewish element. This construction allows Treitschke to separate and 'save' the non-Jewish and non-destructive elements of liberalism from rejection. The same pattern works with reference to the anti-Jewish movement: the Jews are responsible for the movement's dangerous and *destructive* features, which allows Treitschke to salvage also this movement's true and respectable side. Furthermore, the notion of Jews hating (or rather: *eating* [Judenfresser]) Jews (inducing disgust [Ekel] in the observer) implies that being destructive of the group they belong to is an essential characteristic of the Jews. Under this perspective, the 'disgust' with this – as it were – 'carnivore' behaviour seems to point – in reverse – to the fundamental belief that decent human beings are always loyal to 'their group'. If a group consists of people whose main characteristic it is to be disloyal to their own as to any other group, this group is thus different from and inferior to all other groups of human beings.<sup>335</sup> Treitschke concludes:

But is there really nothing but mob brutality and business envy at the bottom of this noisy activity? Are these outbreaks of a deep, long

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<sup>332</sup> Johannes Pfefferkorn (1469-1523) converted to Christianity and is the author of a number of anti-Jewish writings. Johann Andreas Eisenmenger (1654-1704) is the author of 'Entdecktes Judenthum' (1700) and was wrongly assumed to have been a converted Jew (Holz 2001:190n).

<sup>333</sup> Holz (2001:188) notes though that dirt can be wiped off and 'Roheit' (rawness) can be polished and civilized.

<sup>334</sup> Paulus Cassel interpreted this statement as proof of Treitschke's particular dislike of *converted* Jews. Cassel insinuates that the base of this dislike is envy of the person who deliberately adopts a particular belief, suggesting that this belief might be stronger or 'truer' than merely received belief (Cassel 1880:17). Joël (1965) also rejects the allegation that many of the anti-Jewish pamphlets have been written by Jews.

<sup>335</sup> This point has been emphasized by Holz (2001:189-192).

suppressed anger really only a momentary outburst, as hollow and unfounded as once the Teutonic Jew-baiting of 1819? No, – the instinct of the masses has in fact correctly recognized a grave danger, a serious sore spot of the new German life; it is more than an empty phrase when people today talk about a German Jewish question (eine deutsche Judenfrage).

Treitschke refers again to the ‘Hep-Hep’-riots of 1819, which he dismisses as ‘hollow and unfounded’ and contrasts it with the recent anti-Semitic movement which he argues has ‘correctly recognized a great danger’. Treitschke asserts the different character of the recent anti-Semitic movement (although it is also rooted in a ‘deep, long suppressed anger’). While most liberal critics tended to ignore the historical specificity of the anti-Semitism that emerged in the late 1870s, dismissing it as an anachronistic reincarnation of the ‘Hep-Hep’-riots, Treitschke grounds his *sympathies* for the anti-Semitic movement on the fact that it is *not* like the earlier ‘hollow and irrational’ riots – or at least, this is what he wants the reader to believe. The argument implies that the *recent* anti-Semitism is *rational* and *well founded*.<sup>336</sup>

Treitschke’s formulations in this paragraph imply further that the *specific* (modern) character of the anti-Semitic movement in Germany is related to specificities of the *German* historical development. The ‘grave danger’ that has been recognized by the anti-Semites is, according to Treitschke, ‘a serious sore spot of the new German life’; the problem is thus as much ‘new’ as it is specifically *German*. Treitschke concludes that there is a specifically *German* ‘Jewish question’.

In the concluding section of his first article, Treitschke states that

the noisy agitation of the moment appears only as a brutal and spiteful but natural reaction of the Germanic national feeling (des germanischen Volksgefühls) against an alien element which has usurped too much space in our life (ibid.:26).

Treitschke suggests that the removal of the taboo on discussing ‘this evil’ is in itself an achievement.

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<sup>336</sup> Note that above Treitschke has already pointed out that the anti-Semitic voters in Breslau acted ‘not in wild excitement but with quiet deliberation’. Treitschke’s argument seems to imply both the later scholarly distinction between ‘modern anti-Semitism’ and ‘pre-modern anti-Judaism’ and an anticipation of Hitler’s notion of ‘anti-Semitism of reason’ (a phrase used by Hitler in a letter to Adolf Gemlich from September 1919, quoted in Claussen 1987:190-3).

Let us not deceive ourselves: the movement is very deep and strong. A few jokes about the cheap words of wisdom from the mouths of Christian-Socialist soap-box orators will not be sufficient to suppress it. Even in the best-educated circles, among men who would reject with horror any thought of Christian fanaticism or national arrogance, we hear today the cry, as from one mouth: the Jews are our misfortune!

Treitschke formulates here a powerful anti-Semitic slogan,<sup>337</sup> but he puts it into the mouths of an anonymous multitude that is said even to include 'educated men'. Apart from constituting a precaution against criticism, the image of the 'cry, as from one mouth' is a very strong rhetorical means.<sup>338</sup> Treitschke invokes a unified voice that – even metaphorically – did not exist at the time.

Treitschke's claim that even *educated* men held the anti-Semitic persuasion qualifies his earlier description of the anti-Semitic movement as an *anti-establishment* movement: it is further evidence of the rational elements of the movement that it is being joined by 'educated men' as well; the rationality of anti-Semitism transcends class.<sup>339</sup>

The key to the formulation's ambivalence – starting from a perspective apparently critical of anti-Semitism and gradually turning to supporting it – is the 'us' at its exhortative beginning. *We*, the imaginary community of reasonable people of all walks of life who do not like noisy people (Treitschke alludes to Stöcker and other populist demagogues) should not 'deceive ourselves' and underestimate the current movement. However, the line between reevaluation and appreciation is thin. In pointing out the modern character of the anti-Semitic movement lies part of the strength of Treitschke's pamphlet. His understanding is here superior to that of those of his contemporaries who merely turned up their noses to the vulgar noises of the anti-Semites. Treitschke makes clear that anti-Semitism grew 'even in the best educated circles'. He locates the paranoid projection that identifies 'misfortune' straight and simple with 'the Jews' in the imagined common mouth of men (silently including himself) 'who would reject with horror any thought of Christian fanaticism or national arrogance'. With this

<sup>337</sup> Treitschke might be alluding to Luther who had referred to the Jews as a 'misfortune' in his 'Von den Jueden' (Hilberg 1985:17).

<sup>338</sup> Holz argues that the word 'Unglueck' adds a fatalist element because 'against misfortune one is helpless' (Holz 2001:231).

<sup>339</sup> Treitschke had used a similar formulation in a letter from August, 25, 1879: 'The hate against this alien being (Wesen) that has usurped (an sich gerissen) the domination (Vormundschaft) over our press and public opinion erupts from one hundred thousand Germanic hearts like a sound of nature (Naturlaut)' (Rosenberg 1967:107).



statement Treitschke pointed to the existence of a modern type of anti-Jewish attitude that was neither based on religious fanaticism, nor simply on 'national arrogance'.

In the course of the '*Streit*', Treitschke did not move away from most aspects of his position, although he did concretize and qualify a lot. In his very detailed third contribution (Treitschke 1896c; predominantly a response to Bresslau, Lazarus and Cassel) Treitschke claims to express 'the opinion of hundreds of thousands'. He rejects the claim that anti-Jewish agitation has been initiated by ultra-conservatives and ultra-montanists. He claims that 'respectable circles' (*die gute Gesellschaft*) (Treitschke 1896c:49) 'irrespective of party allegiance' discussed for more than a decade 'how to protect our old German ways against the growing power and arrogance (*Übermuth*) of the Jews'. It was only a fear of being identified with the particularist interests of ultra-montanism, clericalism and deep conservatism that made 'many decent men' still hesitate to join in the 'movement'.

On the contrary, I found it more desirable that for a change a man who cannot be silenced with the popular slogans 'intolerant priest' or 'the Jew has to burn' speaks out openly about the current movement (*ibid.*).

In other words, if anti-Semitism has so far been articulated mostly by reactionaries, this merely shows that *non-reactionary anti-Semites* are still waiting for a mouthpiece from a non-clerical background – namely Treitschke. Treitschke offers here an account of the social meaning and function of his own intervention: he helped to shift (one is tempted to say, to emancipate) anti-Semitism from being a domain of clerical conservatism to a truly national ideology. In other words, Treitschke made anti-Semitism respectable not so much for 'respectable society' *as such* (as opposed to 'the street') but for the liberal, *non-clerical mainstream* of 'respectable society' as it had become predominant at the time. In that sense, Treitschke understands himself (correctly) as a *modernizer* of anti-Jewish sentiment – as someone who not so much *makes it* 'respectable' but rather helps it to *remain* respectable with *a new kind of* 'respectable society'.

### 2.2.1.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEW-HATRED, THE MASSES AND THE 'EDUCATED MEN'

Views of the social foundation of the anti-Jewish campaign fall roughly into two models: Treitschke claims to see a massive change of mood in the deep structure of 'the people' and its 'soul' that is also embraced and articulated by 'educated men'. He also appears to believe that some 'educated men' had anticipated it all in the preceding years. Either way, the 'educated men' are secondary to the larger entity of 'the people': they are the latter's mouthpieces.

The alternative model, variations of which are adopted by most others, supposes that the masses of ordinary people are in principle unimpressed and that the anti-Semitism formulated by (some) intellectuals is either dangerous or – more typically – futile demagoguery motivated by enmity to the Imperial state, to liberalism or both. Heinrich Graetz for example argued that the anti-Semitic campaign is 'isolated and little relevant' (Graetz 1965a:26); Seligman Meyer (Meyer 1880a) wrote that the anti-Jewish agitation in Berlin did not have much effect on most people.

*Harry Bresslau* (1965a) rejected the claim that the anti-Semitic agitation 'arose' from the 'instincts of the masses'. He traced its beginnings back to the series of five articles that appeared in the 'Kreuzzeitung' in 1875 in which he claims the more general anti-liberal theme was first combined with anti-Jewish rhetoric and subsequently developed into a campaign against the 'Judenwirtschaft' (Jew-economy) in Prussia and the German *Reich*. These articles were mainly directed against the financial and economic politics of the Prussian and Imperial governments, which were claimed to be under the influence of Jews. Soon, the 'agrarian party', the 'ultra-montanist' tendency within Catholicism, and also particularist (i.e. 'anti-Imperial') newspapers in the provinces took up the theme (ibid.:56f).<sup>340</sup> By locating the origins of anti-Semitism in the conservative camp, i.e. in a background hostile to National-Liberalism, he seems to be trying to 'win back' Treitschke. Bresslau claims that

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<sup>340</sup> The Catholic 'Germania' argued that the anti-Catholic 'Kulturkampf' had been a device deployed by the Jews 'to distract the attention of the German people in order to be able to exploit it properly at the same time' (ibid.:56). Bresslau suggests that the Catholic press obviously hoped to improve its positioning in the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf* by joining Protestant conservatism for an anti-Jewish campaign. Bresslau argues that 'since that time the so-called Jewish question has not disappeared from the agenda' (ibid.:57).

apart from the foundation of the 'Antisemiten-Liga' (which he dismisses as irrelevant) the only news in recent months is that the agitation has been extended 'from the press into parliament' and, addressing Treitschke, 'the unfortunate phenomenon that you also joined the anti-Jewish movement' (ibid.:57). He suggests that until the end of 1875, only 'certain political parties' – identical to those who used to be called 'Reichsfeinde', enemies of the Empire (and in particular of Bismarck's politics) – have driven the public towards anti-Semitism 'for certain political purposes' and 'making use of old prejudices'. Bresslau concludes sarcastically that the political and social background of the initiators of the Jew-baiting is actually 'powerful evidence to prove the Jews' patriotism and national-mindedness (nationale Gesinnung) – in the meaning you and I understand this concept' (ibid.: 58).<sup>341</sup>

In a subsequent comment, Bresslau singles out the character and origin of 'today's movement' as the main point of disagreement between himself and Treitschke (Bresslau 1965b:92). He argues that it is the context of the current anti-Jewish agitation which makes Treitschke's aphorism, 'The Jews are our misfortune', particularly harmful, but disputes that the discussions that Treitschke claims to have observed amongst 'respectable circles' are a general phenomenon (ibid.:92).

*Manuel Joël* points out a contradiction fundamental to Treitschke's argument: his claim that the anti-Jewish agitation is 'deeply rooted' in the 'spirit' of the German people is populist, while his denunciation of 'noisy anti-Semitic rabble' is elitist. Joël finds that Treitschke's distanciation from the anti-Semitic demagoguery is merely tactical. He asserts that the common people are innocent in the first place and deliberately 'seduced' for political reasons.<sup>342</sup> In a similar

<sup>341</sup> In his response, Treitschke (Treitschke 1896c:48) exploited the extent of agreement that Bresslau conceded and the rather defensive tone of his text. *Endner* applauded Treitschke's defiant response but stated that Bresslau 'deserved a more gruff reprimand (derbere Zurechtweisung)' (Endner 1965:123).

*Meyer* (1880b:5) reproached Bresslau for having published a brochure on the *Judenfrage* – because there is no such thing. He declares that Bresslau's 'recognition by the enemy is for a reason (ist erklärlich)'. Naudh sarcastically 'acknowledge[d] the reconciliatory tone' used by Bresslau (Naudh 1965:180). However, he writes that 'practical problems' should not be left in the hands of professors (such as Treitschke and Bresslau) because professors tend to find 'a convenient formula' that would merely cover up and perpetuate 'the evil'.

<sup>342</sup> He writes that 'the people working with loyal industriousness (das in treuem Fleisse arbeitende Volk) ... are innocent of the anti-Jewish campaign ... . Hatred of Jews has always been a poison that has been injected purposefully by fanatics either of religion or of a doctrine or by those who served those for opportunistic reasons. (...) Unless the masses are being seduced, they

vein, *Seligmann Meyer* (Meyer 1880b) argued (in his response to Treitschke's third article) that – judging from the overall sum of the responses to Treitschke's first article – the 'attempt at resuscitating embalmed medieval cadavers'<sup>343</sup> has failed' (Meyer 1880b:3). The 'Jew-baiters' (*Judenhetzer*) (*ibid.*:4) have not managed 'to rob the German people of its culture and enlightenment'.

While Meyer, Bresslau and Joël try to re-claim the soul, instinct and culture of the German people from Treitschke, *Naudh* emphasizes like Treitschke the popular roots of anti-Semitism but attacks what he understands is the liberal conceptual framework of Treitschke's position.

Naudh claims that anti-Semitism started not in 1875 but as early as the escape of Moses and 'his bunch of lazy and dirty thieves' from Egypt (Naudh 1965:181). Anti-Jewish attitudes have never been absent during the last three thousand years, although they changed forms of appearance between persecution, 'passive hate' and 'disgust', 'depending on whether the behaviour of the Jews provoked the one or the other'. In Germany, it existed 'as disgust' until 1848 and 'turned into hate only since liberalism allowed itself to be hijacked by the Jews in order to afford them domination of economy and state' (*ibid.*). Naudh scorns Treitschke for his support for Bismarck's alliance with liberalism and connects this with a criticism of his historiographical method: he implies that Treitschke's historiography is unscientific and ideologically informed by his (liberal) understanding of the present.<sup>344</sup> Naudh defends Stöcker against Treitschke's condescension and claims for Stöcker what Treitschke claimed for the anti-Jewish movement in general: Stöcker only expressed 'what was seething amongst the people'. However – reversing, as it were, Joël's and Bresslau's indictment of manipulation – he reproaches Stöcker for 'soothing the passions of

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have the instinct that the Jews do not differ in humanity from their Christian fellow citizens' (*ibid.*:21f).

<sup>343</sup> 'Wiederbelebungs-experiment, das mit einbalsamirten mittelalterlichen Cadavern vorgenommen wurde'

<sup>344</sup> 'If history was not a *fable convenue* [a story/narration agreed upon because it is *convenient*] but really the science of what has actually happened, then its students would be able to understand or at least to sense what is happening in the present from what has happened in the past, and Herr von Treitschke would not have had to continue spinning yarns (*fabuliren*) for so long, and he would not only now discover to his great surprise that liberalism was fatally disgraced by the Jews (*dass der Liberalismus an den Juden zu Schanden geworden sei*).' Naudh does not, though, indicate how this methodological criticism (betraying a positivist understanding of the concept of 'science') relates to his (unsupported) claim that 'the Jews' disgraced liberalism.

the masses': his obligation to *Christian* love makes him undermine *patriotic* love.<sup>345</sup>

Naudh supports his version of a populist, anti-Semitic nationalism with a long discussion of the concept of 'education', reflecting on Treitschke's use of the term. He points out that Treitschke noted with surprise, and Bresslau rejected, the claim that the 'Jewish question' has even penetrated 'into the circles of the highest education'. Naudh argues that 'these circles' are unlikely to take up the issue (ibid.:183) because they entertained a concept of 'Bildung' that abstracts from the character of the nation. He claims that 'every "Bildung" is essentially (im eigentlichen Sinne) something false – because 'educating' (bilden) does not mean to bring forth the thing itself but an image (Bild), an appearance (Schein) of it'.<sup>346</sup> In Naudh's demotic discourse, the educated – including National Liberals like Treitschke – are suspect because they are simultaneously *also* a cosmopolitan, universal class.

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<sup>345</sup> Naudh expresses similar reservations about the organizers of the 'Antisemitenpetition'. He claims that the petition is also an expression of a popular sentiment but its immediate purpose of merely changing legislation is rather too 'moderate' (ibid.:183).

<sup>346</sup> Naudh believes *Bildung* refers to development through *external* influence while he argues that people should develop 'from inside' only ('von Innen heraus'). He insinuates to Treitschke a mechanical concept of *Bildung* which he attacks by recourse to the concept of *Bildung* as it was developed in the German classical tradition. His argument opposes the notion of an authentic, inalienable essence of the individual human being to attempts to 'form' this individual according to external, i.e. inauthentic educational standards. In Naudh's critique of the concept of *Bildung* two elements of late 18<sup>th</sup> century German thought seem to reverberate: resentment of the elitism of official culture and the anti-French and anti-*hoefische* discourse of German proto-nationalism. Both anticipated elements of the concept of the nation. Naudh mocks the lack of nationalism on the side of the 'educated' elites: they 'attempt to suppress nationality, which is – in Hegel's words – the ground of all living life, and want to be men in general who live in a nowhere land (Menschen schlechthin, die nirgends leben) instead of being Germans, which only they can become and be' (ibid.:184).

### 2.2.1.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEW-HATRED, LIBERALISM AND PROGRESS

The question of what *motivates* the anti-Jewish demagoguery is central in particular to the contributions by Ludwig Bamberger and Heinrich Bernhardt Oppenheim. *Bamberger*<sup>347</sup> argues that ‘the attack on the Jews is only one aspect of today’s great campaign against liberalism’<sup>348</sup> and that ‘without doubt’ it was the attack on liberalism that led Treitschke towards anti-Semitism (ibid.:157).<sup>349</sup> Bamberger states that a ‘good portion of the anger against the Jews comes from the fact of their liberal conviction’ (ibid.:157), quoting Lasker as an example. Since the Jews have predominantly been seated ‘on the benches of the left wing’, he continues, they ‘have to put up with that’ [the anti-Jewish campaign].<sup>350</sup>

Bamberger suggests that ‘educated men’ do not in their entirety hold anti-Jewish opinions (ibid.:175), and, pointing to election results, that ‘the people by and large think in a much more unprejudiced way than some scholars do’ (ibid.:176). Nevertheless, while anti-Jewish sentiment is least widespread in the countryside, where Christian and Jewish poor share the same fate, and rare amongst the uneducated, it is all in all more widespread than the Jews, ‘especially the educated Jews’, are ready to admit (ibid.:177).

*Heinrich Bernhardt Oppenheim* (1880) also argued that whatever is new in the current anti-Jewish movement is of ‘agrarian-socialist origin’. He suggests – like Bresslau – that it had been initiated five years earlier as a campaign against Bismarck in which the Jews were merely a pretext. The campaigners had then

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<sup>347</sup> Bamberger and Oppenheim are the only contributors who referred to the argument of ‘Our prospects’ as a whole; cp. 2.2.5.1.

<sup>348</sup> Bamberger’s choice of the formulation ‘eine Diversion im heutigen grossen Feldzuge gegen den Liberalismus’ is slightly unclear (possibly a misprint, although Hamburger quotes from the original publication also ‘Diversion’ [Hamburger 1968:295]). Bamberger probably does not mean ‘a diversion from...’ but rather ‘one variant within the whole diverse set of strategic options that together constitute...’ (perhaps like in [military] division). ‘Deutschtum und Judentum’ first appeared in the monthly ‘Unsere Zeit’.

<sup>349</sup> To support his view he points out that ‘the essay in whose concluding section the Jewish question is being addressed is directed against liberalism’ (Bamberger 1965:156) as well as against philanthropy and education (ibid.:158). For example, Treitschke expressed approval of Mittelstaedt’s agitation for corporal punishment.

<sup>350</sup> He adds that only two Jewish deputies of previous *Reichstage* sat on the right, the ‘financial aristocrats’ (Fürstlichkeiten der Finanz) Strousberg and von Rothschild. It could be held against Bamberger’s argument that these two – notably Rothschild – are regularly quoted as particularly despicable Jews by anti-Semites. Bamberger’s reduction of the anti-Jewish campaign to nothing but an element of a campaign against liberalism fails to explain why it also directs itself against Jews that are not Liberals.

‘phantasized about a conspiracy between Bismarck, Lasker and Bleichröder’.<sup>351</sup> Oppenheim sees the current campaign as an expression of ‘a systematic promoting of political, clerical and in particular, economic reaction’ for which ‘Herr von Treitschke seems to be working (...) – probably unknowingly’.<sup>352</sup> For Oppenheim, ‘the Jewish question is but a pretext’ as ‘totally different things are at stake’:

To challenge Jewish emancipation would mean challenging the constitutional (staatsrechtlichen) and the economic foundations of the constitutional state (Rechtsstaat). Whoever would try this, would have against himself not only the Jews.

Therefore, ‘not the Jewish question, but the question of Jew-hatred’ needs to be discussed. Oppenheim ridicules the pompous and pretentious rhetoric of Treitschke’s article<sup>353</sup> and refutes Treitschke’s claims about what the current manifestations of the *Zeitgeist* or the *Volksgeist* are, in particular Treitschke’s ‘phantasmagoric presentation’ that there has been a sudden change of mood in society. There has neither been any particularly pro-Jewish mood before, nor is there a deep anti-Jewish movement now amongst the people (Volk). Oppenheim rejects Treitschke’s claims as fictional<sup>354</sup> and points out that Treitschke fails to give any reasons for the sudden change he allegedly has observed. Oppenheim points out that the only firm evidence of a change in mood is in some parts of the (party-political) press, contrary to Treitschke’s claim that this change occurred outside the press.<sup>355</sup>

<sup>351</sup> Oppenheim points to his own article on this in *Die Gegenwart* from October 2, 1875.

<sup>352</sup> Oppenheim adds that he had taken part in the struggle for emancipation already in the 30s and 40s when identical ‘complaints’ were held against the Jews, ‘only sharper and more honest’. This had then been ‘an honest struggle’ about ‘actual prejudices’ and ‘real convictions’. The opponents were ‘more grim, more convinced and more clever’, but some of them also could be ‘converted’ after an ‘objective (sachliche) debate’ fought with ‘real arguments’.

<sup>353</sup> ‘You believe you hear the *Zeitgeist*’s pulse beating, but it is merely the noise made by the scene-shifter (Kulissenschieber)’ (Oppenheim *ibid.*:3).

<sup>354</sup> Oppenheim implies that Treitschke’s text is like a piece of badly written fiction: ‘The lowest ranking novelist would be obliged to motivate such a psychological turn in his characters’.

<sup>355</sup> Oppenheim concludes that Treitschke’s intention is to demonstrate ‘the existence of a “Jewish question”’ and to lend an ‘ideal foundation’ to crude Jew-hatred, mob brutality and economic envy (Poebelroheit und Geschäftsneid) (*ibid.*:4). ‘If the people was as lowly as Herr von Treitschke writes, then today’s Jew-baiting would inevitably lead to atrocities no less than in 1819’ (in the second part of the article that was published January, 10, *Die Gegenwart* No. 17:2, page 17). However, then as now it was merely a small part of the ‘mob (Poebel)’ which was ‘incited by half-educated men enraptured by phraseology (phrasenberauschten Halbgelehrten)’.

Philipson argued similarly against the notion that there has been a fundamental change in the public mood (*AZ* 9. 12. 1879, No 50:785). He suggests that a number of writers from the

Oppenheim's observations are interspersed with reflections of a more philosophical character. At the beginning of his contribution Oppenheim quoted a reflection on the concepts of 'progress' and 'civilization' by the French Romantic writer and critic, Charles-Augustin Saint-Beuve. The quotation implies that the continued existence of 'civilization' cannot be taken for granted or as if it was natural, but has to be (re-)invented and confirmed ever again. It can also be lost: centuries of progress can be reversed 'in just a matter of weeks': 'Savagery is always but two steps away, and it recommences as soon as one falls back'.<sup>356</sup> It is implied that for Oppenheim the anti-Jewish campaign represents such a 'fall-back' into 'savagery' and signifies the precariousness and reversibility of 'progress and civilization'.

His principal target is the decline of idealism and the triumph of *Realpolitik*:

Those who used to believe in the victory of the idea now – with a mocking smile – merely believe in the victory of the cannon, the right of the mightier (ibid.:2).<sup>357</sup>

Together with the worship of Bismarck, this has created a general climate beneficial for reaction. As a further example of this he refers to the argument (also quoted by Treitschke in his first article) that the reintroduction of corporal punishment would mean the 'salvation of society'. Oppenheim opposes the talk about the 'brutalization (Verwilderung) of the masses'.<sup>358</sup> He argues that the call for cruel methods of punishment (as advocated by Mittelstaedt and Treitschke) rather suggests there is 'a certain brutalization (Verwilderung) of the so called educated classes'. He compares the calls for reintroduction of corporal punishment, as well as the current anti-Jewish movement, to clerical

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ultramontane, reactionary and radical camps have increased their clamour while the apparent weakness of the liberals has encouraged all enemies of the Jews (Judenfeinde) to join in. The current anti-Jewish agitation in the press also proves wrong all claims about Jewish domination of the press: there is nothing that would explain why Jewish domination would suddenly have given way to an anti-Semitic campaign. (Philippson was the editor of the *AZ* and – as I presume – wrote in this function the leader articles, which are, however, unsigned. Most of what I attribute in the following to Philippson is actually from unsigned (leader) articles and commentaries.)

<sup>356</sup> 'La sauvagerie est toujours là à deux pas, et, dès qu'on lâche pied, elle recommence'; quoted in French by Oppenheim.

<sup>357</sup> 'Die frueher an den Sieg der Idee geglaubt, glauben nun hohnlächelnd nur noch an den Sieg der Kanone, an das Recht des Stärkeren.'

<sup>358</sup> He suggests that simply the judiciary might have become more effective, rather than that the people have become more vicious.



reactionaries who continued to oppose the heliocentric model of the universe long after it was clearly established.

This comparison points to an important tension in Oppenheim's argument: the reference to the debate about the heliocentric model works as ridicule of anti-liberalism because attacks on heliocentrism were then obviously futile. Oppenheim, like many others, could not imagine that attacks on liberalism and Jewish emancipation could be successful. The centrality of liberal values in society seemed as certain as the centrality of the sun in the galaxy. Nevertheless, his choice of the aphorism by Saint-Beuve (quoted above) shows that Oppenheim also felt ambivalent about his own trust in the irreversibility of progress. While the quote stands for scepticism about progress, the likening of *anti-liberalism* to *anti-heliocentrism* stands for optimism. However, Oppenheim does not take up the theme of the quote in the body of the text at all: the text is ruled by liberal optimism, while the darker sceptical tone is exiled into the pre-text, couched between inverted commas and at a secure distance from the argument.

A different perspective can be found in some remarks by the priest, *Paulus Cassel* who comments on the weaknesses of liberalism from the perspective of a Christian missionary. He writes that one of the roots of the anti-Jewish movement is the fact that the emancipation of the Jews in 1848 happened not for reasons of 'love of the Jews or actual liberal-mindedness (*Freisinnigkeit*)' (Cassel 1880:8) but 'for the sake of being in opposition: emancipation was part of the liberal platform'. Correspondingly the Jews are now attacked with the intention of hurting the *Fortschrittspartei* (ibid.:9). People 'begrudged them the liberty (man gönnte ihnen die Freiheit nicht)' because 'they were not liberated themselves (man war selber nicht frei)' (ibid.:11). In this situation of failed, or incomplete liberation, 'self-righteous envy exploits the old prejudice' (Cassel ibid.:12).<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> 'Pharisäischer Neid gebraucht das alte Vorurtheil.'

#### 2.2.1.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEW-HATRED AND NATIONALISM

More than the two questions of the social background of the anti-Jewish agitation and how it relates to liberalism, the question of the link between the anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic tendencies and nationalism was a main theme in the *Streit*. *Paulus Cassel* might have been the first contributor who emphasized this connection when he called the anti-Jewish movement the 'exuberance of national stimulation (Reizung) over the true cosmopolitanism of the Gospel' (Cassel 1880:7). At the end of the same year, Treitschke published a statement that took up and reversed this argument: he stated that 'the newly reemerging Jew-debate (Judenstreit)' is merely 'the sad inheritance of a long epoch of weakened national pride and insecure religious sentiment' (Treitschke 1965a:225). In this sense, Treitschke holds that

it is our fault that the Jews (das Judenthum) in Germany show off their tribal consciousness (Stammesbewusstsein) as provocatively as in no other large state (ibid.).

While for Cassel and others anti-Semitism seems to signify an overdose of nationalism, for Treitschke it points to a lack of nationalism.

The extent to which the *Streit* is part of, and shaped by, a wider discourse on the nation, is illustrated by the suggestion by Philippson (AZ 1879:785)<sup>360</sup> that Treitschke's article might have been triggered by an article in the French '*Journal des débats*' by J. Bourdeau (November 5, 1879) on the anti-Jewish campaign in Germany. In his own review of this article (AZ 1879:737),<sup>361</sup> Philippson had expressed his 'truly patriotic pain' about the author ridiculing the German anxiety about Jewish domination as unreal, and 'gloatingly' interpreting the fact that the Germans perceive themselves as captives, 'the booty of a conquering race', thus showing their own weakness.<sup>362</sup> One can imagine that if Philippson felt 'patriotic pain' about this kind of comment from a French journalist, Treitschke must have been furious.

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<sup>360</sup> AZ, 9.12.1879, No 50.

<sup>361</sup> AZ 18.11.1879, No 47

<sup>362</sup> Bourdeau points out that after emancipation, the French Jews did not dissolve into 'our purely French community (Gemeinschaft)' but still developed into useful and loyal citizens. He asserts that emancipation turned the Jews of France into the most 'ameliorated' of all Jewish groups. Bourdeau suggests that the Germans should not resent the high level of involvement of Jews in

The most important evidence for the view that the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* was essentially a debate about differing concepts of the nation is the much quoted and celebrated 'Declaration of the Notables' that was published in November 1880.<sup>363</sup> Significantly its text is foremost an appeal to patriotic unity and the defence of central liberal tenets in the name of the German idealist tradition. The *Declaration* begins with a statement on the evolution of German national history ('Declaration' 1965:202):

Fierce struggles have united our fatherland (Vaterland) to a powerfully rising Empire. Unity has been achieved because the feeling of necessary belonging (nothwendigen Zusammengehörigkeit) carried the victory over the tribal and religious divisions that had fragmented our nation like no other. Making individual members [of the nation] pay for these divisions is unfair and vulgar (unedel) and mostly punishes those who honestly and seriously strive to overcome [their] peculiarity and to achieve true amalgamation with the nation (in treuem Zusammengehen mit der Nation die Sonderart abzuwerfen). They experience it [this discrimination] as a breach of loyalty from those with whom they feel they are striving for the same goals. It prevents what is and remains the common goal: the eradication (Ausgleichung) of all past divisions that still continue to exist within the German nation.

The *Declaration* takes the standpoint of those who are committed to eliminating (abzuwerfen) all religious and 'tribal' divisions within the German nation. It claims that this group is most affected by the current anti-Jewish campaign, while social groups not committed to complete assimilation (let alone the existence of social divisions other than religion and 'tribe') are not mentioned. It is implied that such groups were less affected by the anti-Semitic campaign, and

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the life of the nation but appreciate its usefulness: the Jews 'unite the religious and the practical spirit, the taste for metaphysical and for financial speculation' (ibid.:739).

<sup>363</sup> The *AZ* (23.11.1880, No. 47:741f) documented the complete text of the *Declaration of the Notables* including all 75 signatures, introduced with the comment: 'Finally there seems to be light on the horizon! Finally the nightmare that weighed on the minds is being shaken off!'. The following week (November 30, No. 48), Philippson comments that the *Declaration* 'is written in the most noble style and despite its briefness it touches upon all relevant moments with satisfying determination' (ibid.: 753f). The week after (No. 49, December 7), Philippson adds that the *Declaration* 'already is a momentous fact like Lessing's "Nathan", the Prussian constitution or the German Imperial law...' (ibid.:778). In No. 50, December 14 he writes: 'Every sincere patriot is deeply hurt to observe the confusion and divisiveness (Zerfahrenheit und Zerrissenheit) in the German fatherland that has grown so hugely through the latest agitations against the Jews, and the humiliation of the German spirit which this perpetration constitutes. On top of this now comes the regret that these weaknesses and the weakening of the German nation is being watched and condemned abroad; Germany's prestige, honor and her civilizational influence suffer so much from this' (ibid.:785). This comment is followed by several quotes from the English press (ibid.: 786).

they seem to be excluded from the patriotic defence.<sup>364</sup> National unification and the elimination of particularity are presented as historical necessities, counter-tendencies to which are stigmatized as anachronistic:

In various places, in particular the larger towns of the Reich, the racial hatred (*Racenhass*) and fanaticism of the middle ages are currently revived and directed against our Jewish fellow citizens in an unexpected and deeply embarrassing (*beschämender*) fashion.

The current campaign is referred to as ‘racial’ as well as ‘medieval’,<sup>365</sup> adding up to an effective stigmatization: the characterization as ‘racial’ removes the anti-Jewish discourse from the realm of idealism and liberalism, the characterization as ‘medieval’ puts it into contrast with the historical teleology that leads from pre-modern dividedness to national unity.

It is being forgotten that many of them [the Jewish fellow citizens] have brought benefit and honour (*Nutzen und Ehre*) to the fatherland in the areas of business and trade, art and science.

Those who anachronistically hate the Jews have to be reminded that integrative national policy is beneficial to the nation. The formulation ‘it is being forgotten’ presupposes that also the anti-Semites can be expected to acknowledge that the nation is an overriding value – they seem only momentarily forgetful of the benefits the Jews bring. Their motives can only be of a lesser order: the ‘reanimation of an old delusion (*Wahn*)’ in the name of ‘envy’ threatens to poison social relations based on toleration. However, the ‘resistance of level-headed men (*Widerstand besonnener Männer*)’ can still oppose the ‘confusion’ and the ‘artificially fanned passion of the multitude’. The *Declaration* appeals to ‘the Christians of all parties’ and ‘all Germans who cherish the ideal heritage of their great princes, thinkers and poets’ to defend ‘the ground of our common life’:

Respect for every denomination (*Bekenntnis*); equal right; equal sun in competition (*gleiche Sonne im Wettkampf*); equal recognition of merit and achievement (*gleiche Anerkennung tüchtigen Strebens*) for Christians and Jews.

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<sup>364</sup> The use of the formulation ‘Jewish fellow citizens’ also seems implicitly to exclude from the defence Jewish immigrants who are not (yet) citizens.

While the first half of the *Declaration* focuses on national history and the necessity of unification, the second half shifts the argument towards central liberal tenets and also refers to their wider socio-economic framework: the demands with which the *Declaration* culminates include two cultural-political liberal demands – religious freedom and legal equality – and a socio-economic demand (in two complementary formulations): only merit won in unrestricted competition should determine an individual's positioning in society.<sup>366</sup> The *Declaration* thus links Jewish emancipation to a wider conception of a liberal-bourgeois socio-economic order, and on the other hand links the anti-Jewish 'confusion' to 'the passions of the multitude' driven by 'envy'. 'Racial hatred' as well as its rejection are linked to economic interest and class positioning. At the same time, the *Declaration* emphasizes the struggle for German national unification and the elimination of all particularities as the political and historical framework of the conflict and comes to the defence of Jewish citizens who are assimilated or in the process of becoming such. In addition, the explicit reference to the merits of Jews 'in the areas of business and trade, art and science' leaves lower class Jews (such as most of the Eastern immigrants) unmentioned. Although this is not openly articulated, the intertwining of a political-cultural and a socio-economical argument also implies that the process of nation-building is supposed to eliminate particular class interests, namely the 'envy' and the 'confusions' of 'the multitude', along with the elimination of ethnic-cultural particularities.

*Theodor Mommsen's* answer to Treitschke follows similar lines. He explicitly names only a small group of friends as the intended addressees of his statement<sup>367</sup> and explains that this group is defined by a particular historical experience – national unification:

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<sup>365</sup> Both attributes, though, contradict each other: the Middle Ages surely knew 'fanaticism' but not 'racial hatred'.

<sup>366</sup> The image that everybody should enjoy 'the same sun in competition' seems to underline the liberal claim that a social order based on merit and competition is a natural order – under the sun (i.e. out there, in the open field, in the real world), after all, every human being has the same opportunity. This is of course an ideological mystification not only of society but also of nature.

<sup>367</sup> Mommsen writes that he does not want to contribute to the more public debate on the Jews to which he refers as a 'hullabaloo' (Charivari) 'to whose dissonances the rabble (Poebel) on either side contribute to the best of their capacities' (Mommsen 1965b:210) and a 'machination' against which 'a single voice' can hardly hope to be heard. His concern is exclusively with the debate amongst former (National-Liberal) allies and friends, i.e. the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* in a more narrow sense: 'I will be happy when the few words that I want to make will explain my

To our generation it was granted ... that our nation has reached the great goals that we found ahead of us when we were growing up to be thinking people (Mommsen 1965b:210).

*We*, 'our nation' has reached the goals that *we*, 'our generation', 'found ahead of us'. Whoever grew up in those days – i.e. before 1871 – 'will consider no price too high for our *Reichstag* and the Imperial flag come what may – and many a thing may still come'.

This nationalist confession is followed by a big *but*:

But one has to be very steadfast and far-sighted in order actually to enjoy this fortunate fate. The immediate consequences recall the saying that fate punishes men by fulfilling their wishes. While Germany was still in the making, nobody – as befits those who are fighting for a common goal – asked about confessional or tribal differences, about conflicting interests of rural and urban population, of merchants and industrialists. In the realized Germany war is being waged by all against all, and we will soon reach a stage when only he is considered a full citizen who can trace back his descent to one of the three sons of Mannus,<sup>368</sup> who confesses the gospel the way the pastor collocutus<sup>369</sup> does and who gives evidence of his skills in ploughing and sowing. The confessional war, the so called 'Culturkampf' and the recently waged civil war of the wallet is being joined now by the deformed child (Missgeburt) of national feeling, the anti-Semitic campaign (ibid.:211).

Mommsen reasons that '(we) older men, all of whose willing and hoping had been invested in the national idea', feel ambivalent about this state of affairs. On the one hand, the anti-Semitic campaign recalls 'Saturn once more eating his offspring' (ibid.),<sup>370</sup> on the other hand this 'backlash' appears futile and merely a 'retarding moment' that will not actually change the course of things. Nevertheless, this 'suicidal acting of the national feeling' does 'grave damage to persons and interests'.

Mommsen links anti-Semitism to the process of nation-building, describing it as its 'Missgeburt' in one instance, in the next one as 'Saturn eating his

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attitude to this affair to those who want to know it. It separates many, who have otherwise been close and long time allies, and separation hurts. Although the word of conciliation (Verständigung) will fade away in general, it will perhaps find its destination here or there on a personal level.' (ibid.)

<sup>368</sup> The three sons of the god Mannus are the founders of the Germanic tribes in Germanic mythology.

<sup>369</sup> This is a technical term meaning the priest as representing church authority.

<sup>370</sup> This seems to have been a widely used image in contemporary comments on the 'Terror' of the French Revolution.

offspring', then as 'that suicidal acting of the national sentiment' (ibid.). Anti-Semitism appears here as a product of nationalism that is at the same time destroying the national process. The overall historical process cannot be halted by some anti-Semitic noisy rabble but it still does 'grave damage'. He states that the social coherence that was generated in the process of struggling for national unification is lost in the moment that this struggle is successful; once the nation state is established it develops a dynamic of social conflicts, the anti-Catholic 'Culturkampf', economic struggles and anti-Semitism. The national movement aims at a form of social coherence – the national community – but actually seems to be able to guarantee this cohesion only as long as it is not (yet) successful. This awareness gives Mommsen's nationalism an unhappy, melancholy touch.

## 2.2.2 The specifically German character of the 'German Jewish question'

### 2.2.2.1 TREITSCHKE'S FORMULATION OF A GERMAN 'JEWISH QUESTION'

One strand of the *Streit* was about Treitschke's claim that there is a *German* 'Jewish question', or else that the 'Jewish question' had a specifically German character in Germany:

If the English and the French talk with some disdain of the prejudice of the Germans against the Jews we must reply to them: you do not know us; you live in happier circumstances, which make the rise of such 'prejudices' impossible (Treitschke 1896a:22).

Treitschke defends here the anti-Jewish 'prejudice' against criticism from English and French observers. He claims [a)] that Jewish immigration from 'the East' reinforces what he claims to be [b)] the non-Western character – arrogance, unassimilability – of the German Jews. The pivot of this argument is that Jewish immigration is harmful in particular because of a continuity of 'Easternness' between immigrating (Polish) and resident (citizen) German Jews. Both are 'Orientals' in the last instance.

Furthermore, Treitschke argues that the harmful effect of Jewish influence is aggravated by a lack of national-mindedness on the side of the Germans.

Treitschke opposes 'our country' to 'Western Europe':

The number of Jews in Western Europe is so small that they cannot have any noticeable influence upon the morality of the nation. But our country is invaded year after year by multitudes of assiduous trouser-selling youths from the inexhaustible cradle of Poland, whose children and grand-children are to be the future rulers of Germany's stock exchanges and Germany's press (ibid.:23).

Treitschke invokes an 'invasion' of foreigners from the East who first engage in petty trade and will then rise into powerful positions in civil society, presenting this as a quasi-automatic process. He implies that petty trade, trading on the stock market and journalism are essentially similar activities that not only attract the



same sort of people but allow individuals to rise easily from trouser-seller to editor or stock-jobber.<sup>371</sup>

Treitschke claims that massive Jewish immigration throws up the question how 'this alien nation' can be assimilated (*wie wir dies fremde Volksthum mit dem unseren verschmelzen können*).<sup>372</sup> Significantly Treitschke emphasizes as the most threatening aspect of the immigration the fact that the immigrants have successful careers. The crucial problem is therefore not *whether* they can assimilate but *what* exactly the immigrants assimilate *to*. Treitschke asserts that they assimilate not to the 'German people' but to the 'German Jews'. By contrast, 'the Jews of the West and the South' (of Europe) in their great majority 'have become good Frenchmen, Englishmen, Italians, as far as can be reasonably expected from a people of such pure blood and such distinct peculiarity'. Treitschke gives two different reasons for the alleged difference: their number and their alleged descent. Those in the West and the South 'belong mostly to the Spanish branch (Stamm)<sup>373</sup> which looks back on a comparatively proud history and which always adjusted comparatively easily to the Western way of life'. He contrasts these Jews favorably to the alleged mass of Jewish immigrants into Germany:

We Germans, however, have to deal with Jews of the Polish branch (*mit jenem polnischen Judenstamme*), which bears the deep scars of many centuries of Christian tyranny.<sup>374</sup> According to experience it is incomparably more alien to the European and especially to the Germanic character (*dem germanischen Wesen*).

Treitschke refers to those Jews who do not belong to the 'Spanish branch' with the concept of the '*Polish branch*' instead of calling them 'Germanic'. As Treitschke must have been aware, the Jewish culture of Poland was a product of

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<sup>371</sup> As Holz (2001:199) argues, the commonality of trade and journalism is that both are activities of mediation.

<sup>372</sup> 'Volksthum' was coined as a neologism around 1800 and became commonplace through Friedrich Ludwig Jahn's book 'Deutsches Volksthum' from 1810 (Holz 2001:200). The term refers to the 'Wesen' of a 'Volk' as well as the (everyday life, cultural) appearances of the 'Wesen'.

<sup>373</sup> I translate 'Stamm' usually as 'tribe'. However, when it refers to the distinction between Ashkenazim and Sephardim, I translate 'branch' (which sounds weaker than *Stamm*). Since Mommsen for example also refers to the German *Stämme* (in contemporary academic parlance, one would probably write 'ethnic groups') the word 'Stamm' seems to be mostly descriptive and value-free, though from a National-Liberal perspective with a connotation of being anachronistic.

<sup>374</sup> The use of the term 'Christian tyranny' reinforces Treitschke's dissociation from pre-modern anti-Judaism (see above).

immigration by German Jews to Eastern Europe. Logically speaking, the equivalent of the concept 'Spanish' (more precisely, Iberian) Jews would have been 'Germanic' or 'Eastern European' Jews. Given the low esteem, in which Poles were generally held in the German capital at the time, the concept of a 'Polish branch' seems to be tarring the immigrants with additional stigma. Treitschke also avoids the implication that the Jewish immigrants could historically claim some form of Germanness. Under the headings of 'East' and 'West', 'Polish' and 'Spanish', Treitschke's argument invokes a notion of *bad* and *good* Jews. As Holz (2001:204) states: 'The Western Jews are "good Jews" because they appear as "good Frenchmen" (etc.) whereas "bad Jews" bring to bear their "alien Volksthum".' This implies that the best that can be expected from any Jew is not to make the Jewish *Wesen* to *appear*.

I think, however, some of my Jewish friends will admit, with deep regret, that recently a dangerous spirit of arrogance has arisen in Jewish circles and that the influence of Jewry upon our national life, which in former times was often beneficial, has recently often been harmful (Treitschke 1896a:24).<sup>375</sup>

Whether or not Treitschke actually expected that 'Jewish friends' would come forward and defend him in a debate that he seems to anticipate, one cannot know. Criticism of old-fashioned, idiosyncratic Jewish particularity and the effort to get rid of a large part of traditional Jewish habits and attitudes (or what was held to be such) was indeed pivotal to the Enlightenment discourse on Jewish emancipation on the Jewish no less than on the Gentile side. The novelty in Treitschke's variation on this theme is, though, that he suggests a development from 'former times' (when Jews apparently have been modest and 'often beneficial') to modern times ('recently', i.e. since legal emancipation) when (a significant portion of) the Jews *became* arrogant and harmful. This inverts the older liberal argument that emancipation would turn unproductive, conservative and parochial Jews into good and productive citizens of modern society.

In Treitschke's discourse, the peculiarity of the German (i.e. not 'Western') Jews is mirrored and aggravated in its harmful effects by the peculiarity of the German historical situation. The Jews of England or France are 'harmless or

even beneficial' because of the higher 'energy of the national pride and the firmly rooted national way of life (nationale Sitte) of these two nations which look back on centuries of national culture (dieser beiden alten Culturvölker)' (ibid.:27).<sup>376</sup> This implies that a strong national culture does not allow a problematic 'Jewish question' to emerge in the first place. In Germany, the situation is different:

Our national way of life (Gesittung) is young. Our country still essentially lacks national style, instinctive pride, a firmly developed individuality; that is the reason why we were defenceless against alien manners for so long. But we are in the process of acquiring these qualities, and we can only wish that our Jews recognize in time the change which is now occurring in Germany as a necessary consequence of the foundation of the German state.

Treitschke's formulation implies here the notion of Germany as a backward country that has to catch up with her delayed nation-building – an anticipation of the '*verspätete Nation*' and '*Deutscher Sonderweg*' arguments.

#### 2.2.2.2 THE 'EASTERN IMMIGRATION' ISSUE

Treitschke's invocation of a flood-like immigration of 'trouser-selling youths' was perhaps the most commented on passage of his text. Both the immigration-issue and the debate on how to conceptualize the 'two Jewish branches' received plenty of attention.

Only one of numerous responses reacted to the ridiculousness of the claim by ridiculing Treitschke's imagery: Dr. Ruelf from Memel (in the *AZ*)<sup>377</sup> wrote in a dry tone that Treitschke might have been inspired by his visit to the town of Memel – on the German-Polish border – the previous year. There he must have noticed the substantial number of Jewish owned second hand clothes shops.

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<sup>375</sup> Treitschke gives two key examples for this alleged recent tendency: the example for Jewish arrogance is his colleague, the historian Heinrich Graetz; the example for harmfulness is the current Jewish involvement in the economy. Cp chapters 2.2.4 and 2.2.7.

<sup>376</sup> The *Vossische Zeitung* from December 24<sup>th</sup> published an open letter by Ad. Neubauer, assistant librarian at Bodleian in Oxford. In the name of the English Jews he rejects Treitschke's compliments (quoted in *AZ*, 13.1.1880, No 2).

<sup>377</sup> *AZ*, 17.2.1880, No 7:108

However, the shopkeepers there are not 'youths (Juenglinge)',<sup>378</sup> Ruelf makes – in passing – two important points: first, the Eastern Jews are recognized to be German patriots; second, the migrant youths leave the province simply for the reason that they cannot find a living, and not in order to subvert the German *Volksgeist*.<sup>379</sup> Ruelf presents the fact of migration from the province to the capital as an unremarkable, legitimate thing to happen. Perhaps surprisingly, there was only one other contributor to the *Streit* who made the same point, *Paulus Cassel*: 'It is natural and a right for any human being to press towards the light' (Cassel 1880:16).<sup>380</sup>

*Ludwig Bamberger* points to the lack of conclusive statistical evidence and rejects Treitschke's language that evokes the image of an 'incoming flood like that of the Chinese in California'. Further, the people referred to by Treitschke as 'Poles' might actually come not from the Russian but from the *Prussian* part of Poland.<sup>381</sup>

In the latter case, with what right does the bitter opponent of Polish national resistance treat the inhabitants of the province of Poznan as foreigners (Ausländer)? (ibid.:163)

Bamberger points to the contradiction that Treitschke on the one hand demands state-loyalty from ethnic minority groups, but on the other hand excludes such groups – even when they are loyal – on grounds of their ethnicity. However, as Bamberger suggests, the Jews of Poznan have traditionally been understood to be not only a German-speaking, but a Germanizing element of the population.

*Moritz Lazarus* (Lazarus 1880:57-60)<sup>382</sup> writes that a proper examination of the question of Jewish immigration has not been done recently and refers to a

<sup>378</sup> One of these Jewish trouser-sellers had just been awarded by the state a Hebrew bible with the picture of the Kaiser and also an amount of money on the occasion of his diamond wedding; this old Jew had given over half a dozen of brave soldiers to the German fatherland.

<sup>379</sup> Ruelf points out that the young men who migrate West to find themselves a living typically are not trouser-sellers but they are themselves short of decent trousers. Local people donate therefore trousers to Dr. Ruelf in order to hand them on to the emigrating young men. Ruelf offers to send some of the young men to Treitschke for him to have a look at their trousers and perhaps if appropriate to donate a pair of his own.

<sup>380</sup> 'Ein Drängen zum Licht ist jedem Menschen natuerlich und sein Recht.' For Cassel 'the light' might mean not only the better living standard but also the Christian mission of Berlin.

<sup>381</sup> Graetz pointed out that Jews enjoyed unlimited equality in Galicia and are therefore 'little inclined to emigration' (Graetz 1965a:28).

<sup>382</sup> The section quoted here is from the 'Appendix: Statistical data on Jewish immigration and emigration in Prussia' that was added to the printed version of Lazarus' speech from December 1879.

debate on the same issue in the 1850s. Over the period from 1834 to 1855, Jewish emigration from Prussia regularly exceeded immigration by a large margin. For the time after 1855 Lazarus holds that most probably any increase in the number of Jews in Germany would stem from the Jews' relatively higher rate of births rather than from an excess of immigration over emigration. Lazarus suggests that the rate of emigration still in 1880 is most likely to exceed that of immigration.<sup>383</sup> This argument is followed by a more general consideration:

But even if ... a handful more Jews were actually coming to Germany every year, what danger would it be? And I am not invoking here the concept of humanity against strangers, which certain circles seem not to appreciate anymore at all. What I mean is that an Englishman would laugh at us openly if we suggested that he control the immigration of some group of foreigners into the British Isles. He might consider it an insult to his nation to suggest that a handful of foreigners could corrupt the ideals, morality and character of his people (*ibid.*).<sup>384</sup>

Similarly, *Graetz* remarked sarcastically that it is less than flattering for the 'genius of the German people' and its 'heroism'<sup>385</sup> when Treitschke suggests that 'a handful of Jews' would present a 'misfortune' for 40 million Germans (*Graetz* 1965a:26).<sup>386</sup> *Lazarus* quotes Treitschke's claim that it is 'impossible to make the

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<sup>383</sup> For several decades the Prussian statistical office had paid little interest to the 'confessional or racial make-up of immigrants and emigrants' (Hacking 1990:195). However, there was evidence that Jews emigrated in larger numbers than their share in the population would warrant, which – given that overall immigration numbers were known – allowed the conclusion that emigration most probably exceeded immigration. An increase in the number of Jews could therefore only be explained with higher birth-rates and lower mortality rates than with immigration. Nevertheless, the Prussian statistical office had published in 1877 a ('not too consistent', as Hacking writes) essay arguing the case of Jewish mass immigration. However, the statistical office of the city of Berlin strongly rejected the immigration theory in its yearbook of 1880, and subsequently supported Neumann (see below) against the Prussian office (*ibid.*:197).

<sup>384</sup> Whether British society has always been so completely relaxed about (Jewish) immigration cannot be discussed here; Lazarus' reference to the laughing Englishman must have been rhetorically powerful particularly in an ideological context that considered the political culture of England to be paradigmatic.

<sup>385</sup> Similarly (*Meyer* 1880a:29) writes, addressing Treitschke directly: 'And if we have to read in foreign papers that the Germans are dim (*beschränkt*), driven by racial hatred and trapped in prejudices, then this is your responsibility!' Philippson also argues that the anti-Jewish campaign dishonors 'the great German nation' depicting it as being overpowered by only a handful of Jews (in *AZ* 9.12.1879, No 50:787). Again (in *AZ* 23.3.1880, No 12:178) he writes that German Jew-hatred must be mere pretence because the Germans cannot seriously believe that a nation of 43 million could be endangered by half a million of Jews.

<sup>386</sup> Furthermore, *Graetz* (1965b) states that Treitschke relies on questionable source material, that the increase of the Jewish population in Prussia is actually in keeping with that of the population in general, that there is virtually no immigration from Poland into the Prussian provinces bordering on Poland, and that the history of the Jews in Poland actually was less bleak than Treitschke implied. *Graetz* quotes a historical source from the 16<sup>th</sup> century suggesting that the Jews in Poland were engaged in agriculture as well as in trade and the sciences.

hard German heads Jewish'<sup>387</sup> and asks: 'What's the noise about then? Why the fear?'.<sup>388</sup> Lazarus implies here that the problem was not whether Treitschke's readings of immigration statistics (or else his understanding of the ethnic divisions within European Jewry) were correct or not. A large part of the *Streit* subsequently branched out, though, into discussions of just these particulars – which tended to obscure the point and also the actual danger of Treitschke's argument.

*Treitschke* himself also writes (in his answer to Graetz: Treitschke 1896b) that there are no statistical data available that break down immigration numbers according to religious affiliation, which means that such data have to be reconstructed indirectly from other statistics. Against Graetz's doubts Treitschke defends his reading of these data (Treitschke 1896b:31f).<sup>389</sup> However – echoing Lazarus, although obviously with inverse intention – Treitschke also points to the merely secondary importance of the statistical issue: for him, the 'social power' (sociale Machtstellung) of the Jews is not reflected by their numerical share in the population. He states that the migration from the provinces into the cities increases Jewish influence on the commercial and social development of the nation (ibid.:33). On average greater wealth ensures better education of the Jews which in turn ensures greater influence in the press and the financial institutions. Treitschke concludes that, irrespective of population statistics, 'the Jews in Germany are more powerful than in any other country in Western Europe' (ibid.:34).

The repeated claim that there are no Prussian statistics that would break down immigration according to religious affiliation, was refuted by *Salomon Neumann* in his pamphlet 'The fairy-tale of Jewish mass immigration', published later in 1880. Neumann argues that the Prussian statistics give detailed information on religious affiliation, in particular Jewish (Neumann 1880:3).<sup>390</sup>

<sup>387</sup> This formulation from the last section of the same text by Treitschke is quoted in *chapter 2.2.10.1*.

<sup>388</sup> Cassel remarks that many of 'the German heads' have been 'seduced' and have adopted 'French frivolity' which proves that they are 'actually not very hard at all' (Cassel 1880:23).

<sup>389</sup> Treitschke added in the fourth edition of the booklet version of the text ('Ein Wort ueber unser Judenthum') at this place a footnote on Salomon Neumann's text; for Treitschke's attitude towards Neumann see below.

<sup>390</sup> Neumann writes that every year between 1822 and 1840, three hundred more Jews immigrated than emigrated, which is roughly equivalent to the corresponding ratio among the general population (ibid.:6). The numerical extent of net immigration is thus relatively small in this period. From 1840 – 1871 emigration clearly exceeds immigration for all groups of the Prussian

In his review of Neumann's brochure in *Preussische Jahrbuecher* (from January 1881; Treitschke 1965c), *Treitschke* acknowledges the validity of Neumann's observation that Jewish emigration exceeded Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe to the effect that the overall growth of the Jewish population in Prussia was lower than its birth rate. However, he argues that this does not affect the validity of his own claims,

for the social impact of strong foreign immigration is not neutralised by the subsequent emigration of the immigrants. Rather, it is obvious that those elements of Jewry (Judenthum) that will leave Germany after a few years will be least inclined to assimilate (sich zu germanisieren) (Treitschke 1965c:234f).

On the one hand, Treitschke certainly has a point here: the possible existence of an immigrant population that is merely 'stopping over' on its way to the West (in particular America) constitutes a social fact in its own right that is obscured by the statistics. On the other hand, Treitschke glosses over that this constellation is fundamentally different from the one that he had presupposed in his argument. Such a group of 'temporary immigrants' – if they existed – cannot at all be argued to pose the kind of problem for the nation-building process that Treitschke claims the Jews, and in particular Jewish immigrants from the East, pose to Germany. However, instead of conceding defeat on this question, Treitschke concludes that 'further substantial statistical evidence has to be produced before the issue can be evaluated conclusively' (ibid.).<sup>391</sup>

Treitschke returned to the issue in a contribution to *Preussische Jahrbuecher* from November 15, 1883.<sup>392</sup> Here he re-asserts his initial position with reference to statistical material that has – he writes – been published in the meantime, and he took back the one concession he had been forced to make due to Neumann's better command of the statistical data.

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population, while the excess is much higher for the Jews than for the overall population (ibid.: 7–9). Neumann argues that large scale immigration is generally unlikely during times of significant emigration (ibid.:15). Immigration into Prussia was generally very low in the period, and there is no evidence that would suggest that Jewish immigration was above average. Also, the statistics about residents who are born abroad confirm that there was no significant Jewish immigration from the East (ibid.:18).

<sup>391</sup> Adolf Wagner in his review of Neumann's brochure (1880) wrote that for 'cultural reasons', internal migration could also be counted as 'immigration' (Regneri 1998:147).

<sup>392</sup> 'Jewish Immigration to Prussia' (1896h:295-302)

The thrust of Neumann's argument was that Treitschke had mistaken migration from the Eastern Prussian provinces into (first of all) Berlin (in the context of a general migration from the countryside to the urban centres) for immigration. The people Treitschke called 'Polish Jews' were actually 'Prussian Jews'.

The fact that this particular issue gained (relatively) much attention within the debate is further evidence for how much it was bound up in a discourse on *nationality*: from the point of view of a straightforwardly racist or ethnic-culturalist anti-Semitism, it is irrelevant which state's territory the undesirable Jews come from. The fact that Treitschke too did not care much about the precise place of origin of the unwelcome strangers indicates that he already had one foot in the racist discourse that became predominant only in the 1890s.<sup>393</sup>

#### 2.2.2.3 THE 'TWO BRANCHES' ISSUE

The other ground on which Treitschke based his claim of a specifically *German* 'Jewish Question' was his notion of the 'two branches' of Jewry. Three issues were under discussion:

- Treitschke's use of the term 'Polish' (instead of 'Germanic') branch;
- Treitschke's notion that the Jews of the 'Western' countries consisted predominantly of 'Spanish Jews' and that these tended to be more assimilated than the 'Polish (German) Jews';
- Treitschke's understanding of how the 'character' and degree of assimilation of either branch was formed by their differing experience of persecution.

Joël (1965:18f) rejects the concept of a 'Polish branch' and argues that the Jews of Poland are actually the descendants of German Jews (ibid.:18)<sup>394</sup> who never stopped sticking to their 'Germanness (Deutschthum)'.

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<sup>393</sup> Another irony of the debate is that Eastern immigration increased significantly only in the course of the 1880s. To the extent that the defence against Treitschke focussed on proving that there was no Jewish immigration, it was eclipsed by later developments. While Treitschke 'lost' the 'Berliner Antisemitismusstreit' on the terrain of migration statistics, in the long run it proved fatal that the defenders of the Jews won their battle on *this* ground and not on the grounds of principle. The debate's focus on some of the facts and figures aspects of the anti-Jewish discourse contributed to avoiding the more fundamental issues at stake.

<sup>394</sup> 'The *Polish* Jew is the *German* Jew who once had been driven to Poland' (ibid.:19; italics in the original).



*Graetz* (Graetz 1965a) argued that the majority of French Jews are 'of German descent'. *Philippson* also wrote that during the two centuries that Alsace-Lorraine was a part of France more than 120 000 mostly German Jews lived in France; furthermore, most Parisian Jews are of German background.<sup>395</sup> *Oppenheim* argues, referring to his own experience, that in France, England and Holland nine out of ten Jews involved in public affairs are 'German Jews', while the much smaller number of Iberian Jews live more secluded than the former.<sup>396</sup>

*Bresslau* held that only Italian Jewry consisted in its majority of Spanish and Portuguese immigrants, while in France and England (similar to the case in Germany), relatively few Jews are from the 'Spanish branch' (Bresslau 1965a:58). Furthermore, he points out that there is no evident correspondence at all between ethnic ('*Stammes*'-) background and the measure of assimilation or emancipation (ibid.:59f). Differences in the extent of anti-Jewish prejudice in different countries must have other reasons. In England, Bresslau adds, anti-Jewish prejudice 'exists to almost the same degree, only it never took as disgusting forms as currently in Germany' (ibid.:60). In France and Italy it is less strong, firstly because in the Romance countries there is no big difference in physical appearance between Jews and non-Jews, and secondly because 'one does not have to indicate one's confession at any conceivable [official] occasion'. Due to the confessional divide stemming from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, religious divisions in general are also experienced more strongly in Germany than anywhere else.

*Graetz* writes that while Jews in Spain and Portugal suffered much more brutal persecution from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Jews who come to Germany from Poland bring with them 'no scars' since they have been persecuted there only since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>397</sup> *Graetz* concludes that the 'Spanish Jews' integrated themselves despite their scars from centuries of persecution, while the 'German Jews' assimilated even more (in the absence of such scars) – and actually are 'incomparably more patriotic than for example the Poles (*Wasserpölen*) in Upper Silesia and other Slavonic tribes in Germany' (ibid.:28).

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<sup>395</sup> *AZ* 9. 12. 1879, No. 50:786

<sup>396</sup> (in *Die Gegenwart*, 10.1. 1880, No. 17,2:17

<sup>397</sup> *Nadyr* (1879:15) also points out that the Jews in Poland were not persecuted until 1648.

*Treitschke* (1896b:35) responded to Graetz's objections by re-stating his argument in an idiosyncratic way. He writes that the Spanish Jews' downfall under the Christian monarchs (after their enjoyment of cultural and economic high status under the Omayyad dynasty) brought them not only misery but also 'the sublime and enthusiastic power of martyrdom',<sup>398</sup> while the Jews in Poland had suffered a 'formally more moderate but essentially more pernicious tyranny' (ibid.:35). *Treitschke* explains

... that an enslavement over hundreds of years accompanied by modest economic well-being necessarily does greater damage to the character of a people than a history full of great sufferings and struggles. Since our occidental history is essentially (im Wesentlichen) a history of freedom, aberrations and setbacks notwithstanding, the Marrannos of the West must be closer to our nature (unserem Wesen) than the Polish branch of the Jews (ibid.).

*Treitschke* plays here on a Hegelian theme in his distinction between the proud and freedom-loving Spanish Jews and the 'Polish Jews' whose history is not a 'history of freedom' (i.e. of the unfolding of freedom) and whose less brutal fate corrupted their *Volksgeist*. Different from the survivors of the Spanish Catholic reaction, the Jews in Germany carry deep 'scars' not so much from persecution but from the unheroic character of their own history.<sup>399</sup> As a result of this, contemporary German Jews are less patriotic<sup>400</sup> and assimilated than the descendants of the Marranos of France or England and are also rather arrogant and unpleasant fellow citizens.<sup>401</sup>

*Treitschke* concludes:

<sup>398</sup> 'Die erhebende und begeisternde Macht des Martyriums'

<sup>399</sup> This argument is reminiscent of the Hegelian concept of 'historyless peoples'.

<sup>400</sup> *Treitschke* is particularly unimpressed when Graetz defends the lack of patriotic loyalty on the side of the Jews of the Eastern Prussian provinces in the war of 1806/7 (ibid.:42). While Graetz suggests that they had no incentive to be loyal to Prussia, *Treitschke* argues they should have been loyal irrespective of their specific positioning and interests. Graetz in his reply (1965b) defends his approval of the disloyalty of the Jews of Eastern Prussia in the Napoleonic wars that had particularly aroused *Treitschke*'s anger: 'Suspensions about my [lack of] patriotism I have to reject' (Graetz 1965b:50). He points out that he had referred to the Duchy of Warsaw only, not, as *Treitschke* insinuated, to the whole of Poznań and Western Prussia: Warsaw had only briefly been a province of Prussia which – so Graetz – helps to explain that both Poles and Jews welcomed Napoleon as a liberator. The Jews had as well the obvious reason that France had generally taken a more positive attitude towards emancipation than Prussia at the time.

<sup>401</sup> It is possible that *Treitschke*'s notion of the unheroic character of the German Jews is a projection of German nationalism's shame about the lack of a continuous German national (pre-)history.

However, our public opinion finally is beginning to be watchful. In only a few years to come, it will be strengthened enough so that derogatory speeches about the 'ancient Germanic rabble (germanischen Ur-mob)' as can be found now in the Jewish press will be as inconceivable in Germany as they already are in England (ibid.:46).

Again, Treitschke points to the Jews of 'the West', in this case, of England, as showing the way the Jews of Germany ought to go.<sup>402</sup> Except for Graetz, Treitschke does not give any evidence for his claim that the German Jews are less loyal to the German state than British Jews are towards their state.<sup>403</sup>

Treitschke further supports his position with a reference to the history of the French Revolution. While the 'Jews of the South', i.e. those descending from Jews from Portugal, Spain and Avignon, gained legal equality in 1790, the Alsatian, i.e. 'German' Jews did not for another year and a half. Treitschke draws the conclusion that this must be because the 'Spanish Jews' fitted better into Occidental civilization (ibid.:51f).

*Bresslau* in his second reply commented that the differences in the pace of the emancipation of the Jews in France do not warrant conclusions about their 'tribal' character but can be explained much more easily. Bresslau relates that 'the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' of southern France had immigrated as (outwardly) converted Jews (*Scheinchristen*) and therefore had gained civil rights in France as early as 1550. Because they followed all Catholic customs they were not persecuted (as for example the Huguenots were) but managed in some cases even to attain nobility. Only from the 18<sup>th</sup> century on did their descendants begin to re-emphasize their Jewishness. Bresslau concludes on this issue:

That a difference was made between those who had been French for two hundred years on the one hand, and on the other hand, the Jews from Alsace, who had been excluded until 1790 from purchasing land and from almost every decent trade and were generally hated for this reason; that there was hesitation to lead the latter without mediation (*uebergangslos*) from a complete absence of rights into complete equality – this is easily

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<sup>402</sup> Meyer points out that on another occasion Treitschke had quoted Disraeli's boastful remarks on the superiority of the Jews which contradicts his claim that boastful remarks by Jews were only imaginable in Germany (Meyer 1880a: 36).

<sup>403</sup> Treitschke states that Bresslau's response was the only one that he 'read with a sincere feeling of regret' (Treitschke 1896c:47). He claims that he had hoped his text would be welcomed by 'those Jews who unconditionally feel themselves to be Germans'. Treitschke turns the fact that 'a man as totally German-minded (*deutsch gesinnter*) as Bresslau' feels offended by remarks that 'he cannot possibly understand as referring to himself' into another 'proof of that exaggerated sensitivity that distinguishes the German Jews from the French or English Jews' (ibid.:48).

understandable and does not need to be explained through the assumption of a difference in the ability for assimilation between the two groups of European Jewry (Bresslau 1965b:93f).

Bresslau, in his refutation of Treitschke's attempt to 'racialize' or essentialize the different fates of the two groups, develops a historical explanation of the discrimination of the Alsatian Jews by the French National Assembly in 1790 that comes close to a justification.

*Bamberger* points out that there would have been much less outrage about 'trouser-selling youths', had their descendants also become sellers of trousers. Anti-Jewish animosities are a reaction to 'an unusual drive towards learning' (Bamberger 1965:168) and to social advance in the areas of 'honorable (ehrbaren) commerce, industry, art and (...) science (Wissenschaft)'.

Treitschke's principal worries, however, are shared by *Mommsen*, although the latter draws a different conclusion:

With the war of the Jews, we – the nation that has just been unified – enter upon a dangerous path. Our tribes (Stämme) are very unequal among themselves. None of them lacks their specific defects, and our mutual love is not so old that it would not possibly die (rosten)' (Mommsen 1965b:215).

Mommsen adds that German unity is particularly precarious because it has been granted more 'by hatred of our enemies than by our own merit'. Mommsen warns that what has been granted by war can be taken away by disunity in peace (ibid.:216).

### 2.2.3 German culture, Jewish culture, and the concept of a 'mixed culture'

#### 2.2.3.1 TREITSCHKE'S DEMAND THAT THE JEWS BECOME GERMANS

Along with 'the Jews are our misfortune' and the remark about the 'trouser-selling youths', the third of the most frequently quoted sequences of Treitschke's text is the one that contains what he 'has to demand' from the German Jews:

What we have to demand from our Jewish fellow-citizens is simple: that they become Germans, feel themselves simply and justly to be Germans (sich schlicht und recht als Deutsche fühlen), regardless (unbeschadet) of their faith and their old sacred memories, which all of us hold in reverence; for we do not want thousands of years of Germanic civilization (Gesittung) to be followed by an era of German-Jewish mixed culture (Mischkultur) (Treitschke 1896a:23).

The logical structure of this statement is as follows:

- We *demand*: become Germans
  - i.e., feel German
  - regardless of faith and memories
- *for* we do not want ... mixed culture.

The demand that the Jews 'become Germans' regardless<sup>404</sup> of their (Jewish) religiosity seems to imply that religion is irrelevant for Germanness. However, Treitschke's restatement of Germanness as 'feeling' oneself to be German determines 'becoming German' as a process in which a choice that is political as well as cultural, although not (explicitly) religious, is internalized.<sup>405</sup>

In the subsequent sentence, introduced by 'for' (denn), Treitschke gives his reason for demanding the Jews to become Germans: 'we' do not want 'Germanic civilization (Gesittung)' to be replaced by a 'mixed culture'. The 'demand' for the Jews to become Germans appears to be a statement about state citizenship and -loyalty only. The 'want', however, that is articulated in the half-sentence that follows is a statement about 'civilization' (Gesittung) and 'culture'. The statement about 'Gesittung' and culture provides the reason for the statement

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<sup>404</sup> 'Unbeschadet' plus genitive means 'regardless of' although in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the etymology might still have reverberated as '*undamaged by*'.

<sup>405</sup> Holz (2001:211) reads the 'feeling' differently. While I argue that for Treitschke 'becoming German' always includes the dimension of 'feeling' – i.e. a dimension of consciousness or 'spirit' – Holz argues that Treitschke wants to say that the Jews can in the best of cases be expected to *feel* German because they cannot *really become* Germans.

about Germanness: *because* we do not want mixed culture, we *demand* the Jews become Germans. If the issue of Germanness is linked to a concern about culture (its purity and preservation), it is not a purely state-political issue, and it is doubtful how religion could be bracketed out of the equation.

Treitschke's argument here is about his fear that a significant portion of the German Jews might refuse to 'become Germans' and destroy the 'purity' of 'German culture'. His fear is based on his observation that the Jews are mediocre in the arts and sciences and harmful in literature and journalism. That they do not contribute anything positive shows that they do not want to become Germans. Whether they are *unwilling* or actually *unable* to perform up to German standards, is left open by Treitschke – here are two directions into which the debate will subsequently develop: the problem might be seen in Jewish lack of patriotism (a lack of political will; boycott; treason) or in an essential (racial) defect. The majority of the contributions to the *Streit* discussed the validity of Treitschke's evidence: what is the Jewish contribution to German culture, is there such a thing as 'cultural purity', and if there is, is it something worth aspiring to?

Treitschke names the composer Felix Mendelssohn and two liberal politicians, Veit and Riesser (noting that contemporary examples could be added) as positive exceptions:

it would be a sin to forget that a great number of Jews, baptized and unbaptized, (...) were Germans in the best sense of the word, men in whom we revere the noble and fine traits of the German spirit (Geist) (ibid.).

Treitschke confirms his indifference about religion ('baptized and unbaptized') and amplifies his notion of 'feeling' oneself German in terms of 'spirit'. The actual display of 'German spirit' appears now as the decisive quality expected from a full member of German society. The category of 'spirit' traverses the conceptual divide between state and (underlying) culture.

At the same time it cannot be denied, however, that there *are* numerous and powerful groups among our Jewry who definitely do not seriously intend (den guten Willen haben) to become simply Germans [italics added].

While there *were* Jewish *individuals* – Treitschke gives their names – who became Germans, i.e. developed and displayed 'German spirit', there *are* 'numerous and powerful' *groups* (Kreise) who 'definitely' do *not* have this 'good

will'.<sup>406</sup> As evidence he points to the Jewish 'arrogance' displayed by Heinrich Graetz (see chapter 2.2.7), a discussion of the Jewish economic spirit (see chapter 2.2.4) and the role of Jews in the cultural realm:

Among the leading names of art and science there are not many Jews. Far larger is the busy horde of Semitic third-rate talents (ibid.:25).

Treitschke seems to have in mind two groups of Jewish intellectuals in particular, writers (he uses the derogatory term 'Poetaster') and journalists. Both together form a 'swarm of literati' (Literatenschwarm) bonded together by a mutual 'insurance company for immortality' (Unsterblichkeits-Versicherungsanstalt) which hands out 'one-day fame' instantly and 'in cash'. Treitschke here describes cultural life in a language that is borrowed from the sphere of money circulation, linking together both spheres: while dealings in money express 'Jewish spirit', Jewish cultural production reflects the patterns of the former.

The illegitimate Jewish domination of the daily press, however, has the most dangerous implications – a fateful consequence of our old narrow-minded (engerzigen) laws, which denied the Israelites access to most learned professions. For ten years public opinion in many German cities was 'made' mostly by Jewish pens; it was a misfortune for the liberal party, and one of the reasons of its decline, that its papers gave much too much scope to Jewry (dem Judenthum).

While the complaint about alleged Jewish domination of the press was then a staple topos of anti-Jewish agitation, Treitschke gives this an unusual twist claiming that Jewish involvement was one of the reasons of the decline of 'the liberal party'.<sup>407</sup>

But, according to Treitschke, the Jews not only did a disservice to liberalism and its press but to the press in general. He claims that 'the little man cannot be talked out of believing that the Jews write the newspapers and therefore he will not believe anything they say any longer' (ibid.:25). Treitschke assumes here the

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<sup>406</sup> Treitschke seems to hesitate before he goes into more detail about what he has to say about these 'Kreise' and finds it necessary to warn preemptively: 'Even conciliatory words are easily misunderstood here'.

<sup>407</sup> Given that liberalism in Germany owed a lot to a number of Jewish intellectuals and politicians, this is a distortion and slander, turning the victims into perpetrators. What brought the National-Liberal party into crisis was the ending of its cooperation with Bismarck and the Imperial state. The Jewishness of some liberal functionaries was of no relevance to Bismarck's ending this alignment. Treitschke had left the National-Liberal party only a few months before.

air of one, who would like to talk 'the little man' out of his anti-Semitic false belief, but unfortunately the Jews have driven things too far already.

Treitschke continues with another nod towards the *good* qualities of the Jews:

Our press owes much to Jewish talents. The acuteness and nimble quickness (schlagfertige Gewandheit und Schärfe) of the Jewish mind always found the arena of the press a rewarding field (ibid.).

However, this compliment also turns into an indictment in the same breath:

But here too the effect was two-edged. Börne was the first to introduce into our journalism the peculiarly shameless tone which talks about the fatherland as if from an external position (so von aussen her) and without any reverence, as if one did not belong to it (als gehöre man selber gar nicht mit dazu), as if mockery of Germany did not cut deeply into the heart of every individual German (ibid.).

While in the preceding formulation, Jewish journalism is being accused of general trivialization and commercialization of intellectual life, the accusation that is directed against Börne is more specific: Börne talks 'as if from outside' (so von aussen her) and as if he did not belong. Significantly, the charge is not that Börne *is* an outsider and actually *does not* belong – the charge is that *despite of* belonging, he still 'mocks'.

This formulation brings the argument back to Treitschke's 'demand' made above: the Jews, just like everybody else, should 'become Germans' unconditionally and at the same time stop being 'other'. While Treitschke on the one hand asserted the freedom of religion, on the other hand he demands unequivocal identification and identity, not identity and difference interlocked.

Many responses to Treitschke's article argued against Treitschke's claims about what the Jews actually contributed to German culture, but there was also an elaborate discussion of the concepts of 'purity of culture' and 'mixed culture'.<sup>408</sup> At the same time, there was a widespread notion of a specific affinity between German and Jewish 'spirit': it was argued on the one hand that Jewish difference was not a bad thing at all, and on the other hand that the difference was much smaller than Treitschke had claimed.

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<sup>408</sup> In a comment on Bresslau's and Treitschke's argument about 'mixed culture', Wilhelm Endner formulated more explicitly: 'Amongst the *Gruender* and usurers, pawnbrokers and repurchase traders, amongst all the bloodsuckers who understand just how to avoid prison, there are also many of German descent. Those are called "Jews" by the people – not by me –, they are representatives and the first offspring of German-Jewish mixed culture' (Endner 1965:110).



### 2.2.3.2 ON THE VALUE OF THE JEWISH CONTRIBUTION TO GERMAN CULTURE; THE JEWISH ROLE IN JOURNALISM

Most comments on these issues emphasize that the Jewish contribution to German culture and science is very high given that the Jews were institutionally excluded until only one generation before (Lazarus 1880:28-31). *Bresslau* states that the 70 or so Jewish professors at German universities – more than three times of what could be expected from their share in the population – cannot all be ‘third rank’ (as Treitschke had claimed) and argues that the massive involvement of Jews in this sphere is actually an indication of their patriotic commitment: ‘All these men honestly work for the greater honour of the German name and to the advancement of the greatest fame of our nation, German scholarship (Wissenschaft)’ (Bresslau 1965a:68). The employment of Jews in academia demonstrates not only Jewish commitment to the progress of the nation, but also the state’s recognition of this commitment.<sup>409</sup>

Bresslau accuses Treitschke of uncritically replicating the strategy of the ultramontane press to denounce the liberal press as Jewish while hugely exaggerating the role of Jews in the liberal press (ibid.:68f). He reports that although there might indeed be a great number of Jewish correspondents and reporters, their representation on editorial boards and thus their influence on editorial policy is actually minute (ibid.:69). He adds that even if their number was larger ‘I could not really concede that this in itself constituted a misfortune’ since amongst the Jews there are undoubtedly many ‘knowledgeable and decent

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<sup>409</sup> Oppenheim writes similarly: ‘How many Humboldt, Ritter, Helmholtz, Ranke does even the ingenious (geistesgrosse) German nation produce in a century! Since the Jews in Germany constitute just a bit more than one percent of the population ... it is highly honourable for them to be represented at all’ (Oppenheim:1880:19). Oppenheim sarcastically comments that the claim that there is a Jewish ‘insurance company for self-congratulation’ (Lobassekuranz) (similar to Treitschke’s ‘Unsterblichkeits-Versicherungsanstalt’) has been made before and ought not to be leveled at the Jews only. After all, the Jews are not very good at professional cliquishness because they tend to spend their evenings in the family not the pub (Kneipe) where cliques are constructed. Cassel (1880:14) adds that the humour in the formulation is not new: the orientalist Max Mueller had before used the term ‘internationale Lobesversicherungs-Gesellschaft’ in a polemic exchange, and also another writer (Martin Haug) had used ‘Lob-Assekuranzgesellschaft’.

Oppenheim writes further that due to the modern division of labour between critics and producers of art and literature, the critics usually do not have anything to gain from doing favours. Rather it is the daily amount of mediocrity that ‘is blunting’ (Oppenheim 1880:19) and makes one’s judgement more mild. On the other hand, most publications are partisan or party-related, as are most notably Treitschke’s own ‘Preussische Jahrbuecher’. Oppenheim also sarcastically admires Treitschke’s ability to sense the religious background of writers of articles in the press since these tended to be anonymous at the time.

men' (ibid.:70). If there are incompetent and characterless, 'Catilinarian existences' amongst journalists, this is not a specifically Jewish problem. He adds that not the Jews but the Catholic reaction is actually unpatriotic:

Never in the time that I lived through myself has any Jewish publication equalled the polemical perfidy of the Roman Jesuit paper, which carries to the shame of the German people the name 'Germania', nor the malignant slander of the 'Reichsglocke' by Herr Gehlsen nor the arrogant scorn of any national feeling in the 'Vaterland' edited by the ur-Germanic Herr Dr. Sigl!

Bresslau underlines his own patriotism through the repeated attack on ultramontanism's orientation towards Rome. He points out that Treitschke focuses overly on alleged Jewish disloyalty for which there is sparse evidence while Jesuit reaction could much more obviously be charged. This disproportion illustrates the shift in Treitschke's position after the 'Culturkampf'.

Bresslau furthermore rejects Treitschke's comments on Börne and states that 'acerbic self-criticism (schneidige Selbstkritik)' has 'always been a trait of the German character – and not one of its worst traits' (ibid.:71f). He points as an example to Samuel von Pufendorf<sup>410</sup> and argues that 'superior scorn (ueberlegene Hohn)' is not evidence of alienation but a mark of great writers. Bresslau stresses that Börne was very serious in his 'burning ardor of patriotism' (ibid.:72).

*Treitschke* replied to Bresslau that Christian editors are dependent on 'their Jewish correspondents in Paris and London' (Treitschke 1896c:53) as well as the money coming from Jewish advertisers.<sup>411</sup> In other words, the fact that non-Jewish editors are also less anti-Jewish than Treitschke would have expected is in turn proof of the dictatorial influence of the Jews. Treitschke implies that Jewish reporters are able to dominate even those who employ them.<sup>412</sup>

To illustrate the evil influence of 'neo-Judaism', Treitschke adds a discussion of Börne and Heine and 'the days of Young Germany' (ibid.:55). With hindsight,

<sup>410</sup> 1632-1694, the legal theorist and defender of absolutism; like Treitschke from Saxony.

<sup>411</sup> In his second reply to Treitschke, Bresslau remarked dryly: 'I do not think that the Jews who are generally held to be good in business base their decisions about the placement of advertisements on other criteria than the highest possible circulation of their adverts; and as subscribers they can hardly have a significantly larger influence on the press than corresponds to their numerical strength in the German *Reich*' (Bresslau 1965b:94). Similarly, Philippon had written in the *AZ*, 17.2.1880, No 7: 'Herr Treitschke knows little about business' adding that adverts obviously go where ever they are most effective.

as Treitschke claims, these days can now be recognized as ‘an era of moral and intellectual decline’ (sittlichen und geistigen Verfalls):

Alien (unheimische), radical, abstract ideas invaded our life at that time, and a slavish adoration of foreign ideas was preached in the name of liberty. Up to the present day, our best minds have been laboring to liberate the nation from the un-German ideals of that infertile epoch and to lead it back to itself (ibid.).

While Bresslau had likened Börne to Pufendorf, Treitschke argues that Börne lacked what constituted Pufendorf’s greatness, namely ‘superiority’ and ‘thorough industriousness’ (Fleiss). Also Börne’s patriotism lacked seriousness. He compares Heine favourably to Börne because of Heine’s ‘richer nature’ (ibid.:56) and ‘most of all, because Heine was far more German than Börne’. Treitschke distinguishes two dimensions of Heine’s work, the ‘international jokes’ for which he earned a reputation as being ‘*vraiment Parisien*’ and those poems – like ‘Loreley’ – that display ‘straightforwardly German sentiment’ or even the ‘smell of the soil’ (Erdgeruch) from the Rhineland. Dismissing the former but applauding the latter, Treitschke posits Heine in a line of Jews who ‘recognized that they can achieve great works of art only on the tracks of the German spirit’. By way of making a half-hearted compliment, Treitschke turns Heine into a witness to his own argument. Börne, as opposed to Heine, used the ‘abstract journalistic language of education (abstrakte journalistische Bildungssprache)’, which is ‘never truly German’. Treitschke concludes:

Only arrogant mediocrity opposes itself with an air of imagined superiority to the knightly (ritterlichen) Germanic Esau. ... When we oppose such bad habits (Unarten) of the evil elements of our Jewry (unseres Judenthums), men like Bresslau should support us. I cannot find a serious and deep disagreement between him and myself.

Only a small number of contributors did not engage in a discussion of the facts and figures of Jewish achievement. *Ludwig Bamberger* turns Treitschke’s claim that there are only few Jewish talents prominent in the arts and sciences against Treitschke: if that were true, Bamberger writes sarcastically, it should be a relief

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<sup>412</sup> Treitschke wrote later in his response to Mommsen: ‘Who fights today in the press the arrogance of the Jews (des Judenthums) does not misuse the power of the mightier but stands one against a hundred’ (Treitschke 1965b:229).

to him because it would lessen the Jews' chances of polluting German culture.<sup>413</sup> Even Bamberger, however, finds it necessary to add that there are many 'quiet, solemn and idealistic' (Bamberger 1965:173) Jewish scholars who do not get the attention that noisy 'third rank talents' of either denomination receive.

The author who adopted the most assertive tone of all Jewish respondents, Nadyr, wrote, addressing Treitschke: 'you find the allegedly disproportionate influence of the Jews on the press unpleasant – the more pleasant it is to us' (Nadyr 1879:13).<sup>414</sup> On the argument that the German Jews should become more German, Nadyr retorts: 'To be honest, we foreign Jews find that our German co-religionists are already much too Germanized.' (ibid.:14) He quotes Börne as saying that the German Jews should aspire to all the good qualities of the Germans without the bad ones and suggests that the German Jews are not selective enough in assimilating (ibid.:15). They have no reason to be ashamed of their ancestry. Nadyr quotes the literal wording of Graetz's remark on Börne and Heine,<sup>415</sup> suggesting that there is nothing wrong with it:

Börne and Heine introduced into German literature (machten heimisch) wit and spirit, of which then – apart from Lessing – only a few in Germany had a proper understanding (ibid.:19).

Nadyr also argues that the German Jews had been right to participate in the debates of the *Kulturkampf* since this was not a debate about religious dogma but one about the character of the state: in participating, the Jews thus clearly acted as German nationals (ibid.:25).

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<sup>413</sup> Bamberger misses here the *kulturpessimistische* point of Treitschke's argument that in contemporary culture, the mediocre dominates the truly great.

<sup>414</sup> He adds that he is confident, nevertheless, that 'the sad and ignominious years of *Hep Hep* will not come back' because the German people has come of age (muendig) (ibid.).

<sup>415</sup> The reference is to Graetz 1870:369.

### 2.2.3.3 ON THE CONCEPT OF A 'MIXED CULTURE'

For *Bamberger*, Treitschke's concept of the 'purity' of culture is mistaken and meaningless (Bamberger 1965:171):

If purity was a particularly distinguishing quality in connection with the concept of culture, then indeed one would have to be suspicious about German culture. (...) If culture was something to be grown from the primeval soil (Urwaldboden), then the concept of a pure German culture that is thousands of years old would be an [enormously exaggerated] fiction (...) Fortunately, though, culture is just the opposite of the linear propagation of a single national spirit (Volksgeist), and German culture stands so high because it managed to assimilate and digest so much (in sich aufzunehmen und zu verarbeiten vermochte) (ibid.:171f).

Bamberger points out that Goethe had named Shakespeare and Spinoza as his main influences and quotes Herder's statement:

(W)e Germans would still live in the forests peacefully like Americans, or rather brutally fighting and being heroes, had not the chain of foreign culture urged itself closely upon us and forced us, with the might of centuries, to get involved.<sup>416</sup>

Since German culture is anything but pure in the first place, 'it is a mystery' how it should 'become a mixed culture' through the influence of the Jews 'who have settled in Germany almost from the very beginnings' (ibid.:172). Bamberger points to the particular paradox that they are considered a threat to the purity of German culture because they 'push into the German universities and the German army', 'the two breasts of contemporary Germany's communal life':

They sit in the lectures of Treitschke, Duehring and Adolf Wagner, they even break their necks for the music of Richard Wagner, and in return – O ingratitude – they are accused of shoving German culture into their bags as if they could run away with it like with a silver spoon (ibid.).

Bamberger gives here a striking metaphor for the reification of culture into a set of static artefacts that underlies Treitschke's thinking.

*Bresslau* rejects the concept of the unitary character of German culture in similar terms:

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<sup>416</sup> Bamberger quotes from 'On the Origin of Language': '... wenn die Kette fremder Cultur nicht so nah an uns gedrängt und mit der Gewalt ganzer Jahrhunderte uns genoethigt hätte, mit einzugreifen' (translated from the quotation in Bamberger).

Our culture (Gesittung) is not at all, not even predominantly, a Germanic one, and in fact we have a mixed culture resting on three factors: Germanity, Christianity and classical antiquity (...). Nothing had a stronger impact on the culture of the German people than both the Old and the New Testament, both of which are undeniably a product of Judaism (Judenthum) (Bresslau 1965a:61).

Bresslau stresses, however, that he 'subscribe(s) totally and completely' (ibid.:62) to Treitschke's demand for the 'Israelites' to 'become Germans'.<sup>417</sup> He merely rejects Treitschke's claim that 'numerous and powerful circles' within Jewry did not intend 'to give up that quality that distinguishes the Jew from the Germanic person'. Bresslau argues that this was true of only 'a small bunch of ultra-orthodox rabbis' (ibid.:63) who still considered 'Palestine the promised land' and the Jewish residence in Germany 'merely temporary'.<sup>418</sup>

Holding the large majority of German Jews responsible for this bunch's attitude would be as unfair and inappropriate as if one would condemn the large majority of German Catholics because a few fanatical ultra-montanists are prepared any moment to subordinate their German national feeling to Rome's claim to power. Anyway, the former's small and declining number is incomparably less dangerous to the German being (Wesen) than the activities (Treiben) of those minions of Rome (Römlinge) who dare to want to teach the Jews patriotism (ibid.).

Bresslau claims that the 'ultra-montanists' constitute a much greater potential of disloyalty than the orthodox Jews do.

The fact that there is a small number of unassimilated Jews, in particular in the countryside, is, however, not surprising:

Just a century ago everything prevented the Jews from becoming German. The religious divide, the intolerance of Christian as well as Jewish clerics (Pfaffen), and most of all a legislation that made them pariahs, kept away every beam of German education from the dirty and despised quarters where princely favour (landesfürstliche Gnade) had granted them a meagre existence (ibid.:64).

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<sup>417</sup> Bresslau writes that had Treitschke not joined into the common, 'merely negative critique of Jewry (Judenthum)', he could have 'earned' for himself 'considerable merits about the development of the Jewish question'. For that purpose, he would have had to make an effort to 'deepen the question positively', namely to point out what exactly distinguishes a Jew 'born and brought up in Germany' from a 'Germanic' person (Germanen) of similar background and by which means 'the transmutation of a Jewish into a Germanic person could be accelerated'. Treitschke then would have 'obliged every impartial and unprejudiced Jew to be grateful'.

<sup>418</sup> The possibility of secular Jewish nationalism does not seem to occur to Bresslau.

Given that emancipation had only been under way for such a short time, it is rather surprising that the 'process of amalgamation' has already succeeded so far (ibid.:65). The urging of so many Jews into education is, to Bresslau, a sign of their determination to assimilate to German culture. Jewish scholars like Bresslau himself are making an effort to accelerate the process by leading the way with a good example – but, directly addressing Treitschke again:

... You join the men who make the divide more grave – that we chose as our lives' aim to make disappear as far as we can! – and thus you make our effort more difficult. I do not doubt, my most respected colleague, that you intend the good, but allow me to say that you are achieving the evil! (ibid.)

The central argument of *Moritz Lazarus*' contribution is that 'true culture ... consists in diversity', and that 'the permanent vocation of the Jews' is to be promoters of difference.<sup>419</sup> Lazarus sees at the root of the problem a conception of history that is teleological and linear. He rejects the notion that the earlier 'stage' of a development has a right to exist only insofar as it 'gives birth' to the subsequent 'stage' or form of existence (ibid.:41).<sup>420</sup> He argues that 'the generic' or 'humanity' is not the *result* of an evolutionary process but the whole of *all* the forms or individuals that evolve along the way *during* the process. Rather than believing that history is evolving towards an 'end' – such as 'the individual' or 'the nation' – it ought to be understood that 'the whole great diversity (Mannigfaltigkeit) of spiritual life and creation' is 'valuable (wertvoll) in itself'.

Here [in the linear and teleological conception of history] lies the deepest root of all intolerance. This is why for the Catholic, Protestantism is nothing but rubbish and heresy, while for the Protestant, Catholicism is but a preparatory stage. (...) It has been held as an ideal that the whole world should adopt the culture of one people: all should become Roman or French. True culture, though, consists in diversity (Mannigfaltigkeit) (ibid.).

Both Catholicism and Protestantism are wrong. In a Herderian tone, Lazarus condemns the cultural imperialism of Roman as well as French culture and adds:

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<sup>419</sup> This is something, he adds without elaborating on it, that the Jews have in common with the Germans (Lazarus 1880:44).

<sup>420</sup> Lazarus introduces this idea with the analogy that although 'one might argue that being a mother is a woman's essential destination (wesentliche Bestimmung)', 'a woman is also a human being in her own right' (ibid.).

Mores, customs, strivings, life-styles (Sitten, Gebräuche, Bestrebungen, Lebensformen) can, may and should be diverse (mannigfaltig); they will have to be objectively different because they are meant to be the ultimate, the most pure, the most certain for everyone [subjectively] (weil sie für Jeden das ihm Höchste, Reinste, Gewisseste seyn sollen). (...) How will truth grow if not through spiritual struggle, (...) through the competition of forces? ( ibid.:42).

Lazarus does not reject the notions of development and progress *in general*. The 'ultimate' though consists for him not in 'unity (Einheit)' but in 'totality (Gesamtheit)' and 'diversity (Mannigfaltigkeit)' 'which cannot nor should be destroyed (vertilgt)'.

At this point Lazarus attributes a particular role to the Jews: the 'permanent vocation (Aufgabe) of the Jews' is to be universal promoters of difference: 'By participating in various national spirits' they become themselves more and more diverse. The Jews differ from all other peoples because they gain 'heightening and deepening of their own (Erhöhung und Vertiefung des Eignen)' by way of 'totally immersing themselves (ganz eingehen)' into the particular (national) cultures of the societies they live in, whereas all other peoples 'learn from each other' while 'always remaining separate'. The Jews 'find, relate to and reinforce' in every people or culture those elements that correspond to their own identity (Eignes). The Jews thus represent a generic element (Allgemeines) which they find and reinforce in every particular people. Doing this feeds and enhances within themselves 'the generic' as *their own particular* characteristic. In this sense, Lazarus' argument implies that the Jews constitute a common denominator of all other peoples and cultures that they immerse themselves in. Lazarus defines this generic element as 'an ethical-religious content that overshadows in power and dignity any individual deed'. This specific content has come to replace what previously had been the Jews' nationality. Lazarus suggests that 'the Jews do not have a nationality anymore' (ibid.:43). They are 'individualized according to where they live'. This allows Lazarus – in an attempt to square the circle of (German) identity and (Jewish) difference – to define the Jews as 'not an alien but an individually shaped distinct element inherent to each nation, reciprocally and specifically appropriated by them'



(ibid.:44). This constitutes their 'specific capacity (spezifische Leistungsfähigkeit)'.

In a key passage of his speech Lazarus discusses Treitschke's 'demand' that the Jews become Germans, developing his concept of the specific role of the Jews within the German nation. Lazarus asserts that the 'concept' and the 'ideal' of the nation have to undergo 'permanent deepening (fortwährende Vertiefung) or heightening (Erhöhung)' in a permanent struggle for national unity:

All of us who care for the ideal and its fulfillment should struggle together against all those who fail to participate truly and energetically in the national idea, against all those who hinder and damage the ideality through their base attitudes (niedere Gesinnung) and their mean ways of living and acting (ibid.:36).

Any separation through confession and descent will damage the struggle for national 'ideality'. Lazarus' understanding of the 'national ideality' includes a cosmopolitan dimension:

Let the highest development of the idea of German nationality be the standard around which we flock. But we aim at a Germany that is free of any felony against received (angestammte) traditions as well as against universal human principles (allgemeine menschheitliche Prinzipien). True Germany ... must be high minded and generous (ibid.:36f).

Lazarus argues that 'the idea of humanity stands higher than any *Volksthum*'. However, Lazarus seems to find the appreciation of the superiority of humanity over nationality a typically German notion:

Never, though, had the particular spirit (Gemuehtsart) of any one people a more direct relationship to this idea of Humanity than the particular spirit of the Germans has (ibid.).

Other nations might have served humanity *unintentionally*, the 'particular course of our history (der besondere Gang unserer Geschichte)', however, has led the Germans *to choosing consciously* the idea of humanity as their (national) trademark. Lazarus develops the notion of the particularly unselfish character of German nationalism emphatically:

We have often been reprimanded for not estimating our own but instead admiring the alien. It has never been possible to vaccinate us with a decent

dosage of national pride (...). With all the will in the world we do not manage to despise the alien, to answer the hate of the enemy with equal hate; we cannot help searching for and acknowledging the good wherever it may be (ibid.:38).

As a witness to his argument, Lazarus quotes Schiller:

Germans, you hope in vain  
Ever to form a nation. Strive instead, as you can,  
To a state of greater freedom  
Than that: strive to be humans.<sup>421</sup>

At this point in the argument, Lazarus introduces the concept of 'mixed culture'. Lazarus argues that 'it has been long established' that the most diversely mixed peoples turn out to be the culturally and historically strongest ones. Therefore the German Jews 'have the duty ... to remain Jews' and to put their Judaism 'to the service of German national spirit as a part of its strength'. This is not, however, an issue of the 'mixing of blood' but of 'spiritual abilities, moral drives', and the 'longing (Sehnsucht) to shape (gestalten) the world'. These 'spiritual abilities' are incorporated individually in the tribes that come together to form the nation: only in the *nation* they are harmonized and transcend the individual and the tribal towards the generically *human*.

As if, in a peculiar way, echoing Lazarus, *Naudh* too attacks the (liberal) trajectory of 'progress' and pleads for the particular and for diversity against the generic and the unified, but with diametrically opposed conclusions for the status of the Jews. *Naudh* accuses liberalism of 'ignorance of the particularity of men (Menschen) by declaring all men to be equal'. *Naudh* finds 'strange' that both Treitschke and Bresslau 'more or less subscribe to liberalism, although all history only originated from the diversity of people' (*Naudh* 1965:184).

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<sup>421</sup> 'Zur Nation euch zu bilden, ihr hofft es Deutsche vergebens; /bildet, ihr koennt es, dafür freier zu Menschen euch aus' (my translation). This epigram (entitled 'Deutscher Nationalcharakter') is number 96 of a set of 414 mostly polemical distichons and other short poems called 'Xenien' that Goethe and Schiller wrote in close co-operation and published in the 'Musen-Almanach für das Jahr 1797' (a literary almanac) in 1796. The title is an allusion to the title of book 13 of the 'Epigrammata' (85 AD) by the Roman poet Valerius Martialis; a *xenion* is a gift to be given to a guest, which is here ironical due to the polemical character of the 'Xenien'. The preceding epigram 95 is called 'Das deutsche Reich': 'Deutschland? Aber wo liegt es? Ich weiss das Land nicht zu finden; /Wo das gelehrte beginnt, hoert das politische auf. (Germany? Where does it lie? I don't know where to look for that place; where the scholarly starts, the political ends.)'

Naudh defines historiography as the study of the particularity of people and claims that it is not compatible with the egalitarian ideas intrinsic to liberalism ('the scholasticism of politics'). The 'science of politics' will only be able to progress 'when it liberates itself from scholastic dogmatism (Formelwesen) and transforms itself into an empirical science (Beobachtungs- und Erfahrungs-Wissenschaft)'.<sup>422</sup> Liberals try to deflect from the 'Jewish question' with 'unscientific' formulas:

According to the liberal textbook, all men (Menschen) are equal and thus it is a mere matter of tactlessness (Unhöflichkeit) of the Jews that they are Jews (ibid.).

The sarcastic use of the word 'tactlessness' seems to imply that the liberal conception falsely suggests that the ways one acts in society can be arbitrarily chosen as well as changed. For Naudh, there is more to the issue than 'tactful' or not so tactful *visible* behaviour, for behind the visible stands the invisible, the racial essence. Naudh exploits the fact that for liberalism – as for himself – 'Jewishness' is not a positive value: he does not reproach liberalism for being pro-Jewish but for being *naïve* about the Jews. According to Naudh, liberalism underestimates the danger when it mistakes Jewishness for a mere surface phenomenon – for just an accidental matter of bad manners.

Naudh argues that Treitschke and Bresslau share the 'liberal formula'. When Treitschke demands that the Jews *become* Germans, Bresslau responds that they already *are* Germans (and also that the Germans were 'half Jews' due to the Jewish origin of Christianity) (ibid.:185). Naudh rejects Bresslau's account of the concept of 'mixed culture'. The influence of classical antiquity on the formation of German culture has not produced a 'mixed culture':

Greeks and Romans were people of our tribe (Stammes), their spirit (Geist) was closely related to ours and just as alien to the Semitic spirit. Mommsen has already pointed out that it was for this reason that the Punic wars became wars of extinction (Vernichtungskriege), and the proverbial 'Punic loyalty' refers to a feature of the Semitic character in a way similar to how we use the term 'Jewish' when referring to a moral character type (ibid.:185).

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<sup>422</sup> Cp. Naudh's comment on 'convenience' (ibid.:181: 'fable convenu').

Naudh suggests a three thousand year long Semitic-Gentile conflict (with the Phoenicians temporarily standing in for the Jews).<sup>423</sup> Although Naudh does not use the word on this occasion, his notion of a conflict between two sets of peoples over a period of 3000 years logically presupposes the concept of 'race'. While, however, 'the old Jews' failed 'to impose a Jewish mixed culture' on 'us', 'the living Jews' constitute an actual danger (ibid.:186). This threat is not so much that of a mixed culture but rather one of '*Entsittlichung*', i.e. a loss of culture, morality and civilization (ibid.:187) because the Jews are not bearers of a civilization in the first place.

The emphasis on the cultural-moral threat constituted by the Jews underpins the radicality of Naudh's position. He is critical of the legalistic character of the 'Antisemitenpetition' which he finds too 'moderate': the danger will not be averted 'even when we exclude the Jews again from the sphere of the state (aus unserem Staatsleben)'. Naudh grounds his argument on the anthropological notion that 'in every individual all good and all bad characteristics can be found together' (ibid.). Actual individual behaviour is determined by predominance of the one or the other element. This predominance, however, in turn is determined by social 'consensus', i.e. in the interdependence with fellow members of society. This is why not so much Jewish positioning *in the state*, but rather the number of Jews living *in society* is at the root of the 'Jewish question'. Naudh mentions in particular the 'cunning' (die Listen) of the Jews. The necessity for Germans to compete with Jews will inevitably force them to adopt essentially 'Jewish' strategies.

The anthropological model presented by Naudh helps him explaining why it is due to Jewish influence and responsibility if *non-Jewish* Germans display behaviour that is stigmatized as Jewish. However, this line of argument still needs to take account of the obvious fact that the Jews – even if there was extraordinary immigration – would still constitute a tiny minority in Germany: why would not a morally superior German majority of more than 98 % simply annihilate Jewish misbehaviour (which had been the expectation underpinning the Enlightenment *pro-emancipation* position)? This is where Naudh brings in the concept of the Jews are an *unproductive parasitic race*.

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<sup>423</sup> For this claim he could draw on the authority of 19<sup>th</sup> century historians as Bernal (1991:341f) and Burkert (1992 *introduction*) show.

Naudh suggests that 'we' should not wait and see when 'the Jews will have the kindness to become Germans which actually they do not want at all and, even if they wanted, could not do' (ibid.:188). 'If historiography would be done in a more strictly scientific way (mehr in naturwissenschaftlicher Richtung)' and if ethnography 'would be given the weight it deserves', Naudh argues, then historians would not come up with the 'adventurous idea' of turning Jews into Germans.

[The Jew's] bones are crooked and askew and his muscles are weak, which is why he has a low fitness for work (Arbeitstuechtigkeit) coupled with an even lower enthusiasm for work (Arbeitslust) (ibid.).

Naudh suggests that 'a whole people cannot do without working' which is why the Jews cannot form a people of their own but are forced to live as 'parasites' from other peoples' (productive) work. 'Their physical disposition' also determines 'their concept of God' and 'their spiritual (geistige) disposition' in general. While for the German, religion means 'communion with God through moral betterment (sittliche Läuterung)', the Jews '*dispute* with their God (setzen sich mit ihrem Gotte *auseinander*) [italics in the original]'. They posit themselves 'as would-be competitors (als Contrahenten)' against God and as negotiating partners 'enter into an immoral covenant (unsittlichen Vertrag)' (ibid.:188f). The subject of this covenant is the exchange of worship in return for the supply of peoples 'to eat': 'That is the promise that the people of parasites needed', Naudh concludes.<sup>424</sup> 'The difference in the understanding of one's relation to God and world' in the German/Aryan and the Jewish conception is 'that the Aryan considers perfection his task, while the Jew considers enrichment his task'. A feeling of honour (Ehrgefühl) and idealism spring from the Aryan conception, while they would contradict the nature of the Jewish covenant and be inconvenient for anyone living as a parasite. On the other hand, a lack of feeling of honour might result in ruthlessness and thus economic success. The effects of the covenant cannot be avoided by conversion: 'Those who deny their Torah still cannot deny their descent': the particular type of covenant the Jews made a

<sup>424</sup> Naudh refers here to 5 Moses (Deuteronomy) 7, 16. From the context of the formulation quoted by Naudh it is quite clear that according to Moses, God is meant to give Israel only those peoples 'to eat' that are *enemies* of Israel. The presupposition of the covenant is that Israel is the

centrepiece of their religion was the expression of their particular 'mindset' (Denkungsart), and the latter in turn was 'a function of what was then the Jewish brain. There is no reason to assume that today's Jewish brain would not function in the same way' (ibid.:190). The notion of the identity of 'the Jewish brain' then and now is supported by the assumed fact of 'three thousand years of Jewish in-breeding' (ibid.:189) and also by the observation that for example 'Negroes in Northern America did not become white' (ibid.:190).<sup>425</sup> This proves that people's [physical] 'organization does not change because of a change of climate'. Naudh formulates a racist version of the demand for respect for cultural difference:

We do not want to hold the Jews' lack of honour (Ehrlosigkeit) against them, while we would hold it against a German, whose physique is designed for honour (dessen Organisation auf Ehrgefühl veranlagt ist). It is denied to the physique of the Jew like the drive and the fitness for work.

Naudh suggests that in particular, the Jew 'does not know work honour (Arbeitschre)'.<sup>426</sup> He concludes that because of the Jews' 'parasitical way of life, to which their physical characteristics drive them', their character will not be affected by 'so-called emancipation' (ibid.:191).

*Treitschke* (1896c) responded to Bresslau's claim that German culture was a 'mixed culture' by restating his earlier argument:

The intellectual work of past millennia is given to all modern peoples to lean on. Although our German culture (Gesittung) flows – as Bresslau is right to point out – from three sources, classical antiquity, Christianity and Germanity, it is not at all a mixed culture: we have amalgamated the Christian and the Classical ideals with our own essence (Wesen) so totally that it has become part of our flesh and blood. But we do not want the neo-Jewish being (das neujuedische Wesen) to join these three cultural powers as a fourth one because whatever elements of Judaism fit in with the German genius have long been included into our culture (Gesittung) through the mediation of Christianity. We do not want this because we have experienced bitterly enough once before<sup>427</sup> that the neo-Jewish spirit leads our people astray when it faces ours independently (*Treitschke* 1896c:54).

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weakest and lowest of all peoples, but the adherence to God will guarantee Israel divine support against attackers and oppressors.

<sup>425</sup> Naudh got his (18<sup>th</sup> century style) geo-ethnography wrong: if one thought of skin colour as an effect of climate then one ought to expect that the 'Negroes' as well as the 'Whites' in America should have become 'Reds'.

<sup>426</sup> This concept seems to be a mixture of 'work ethics' and the pride of doing productive work.

<sup>427</sup> Unclear reference; probably to the 'Young Germany' as subsequently discussed.

Treitschke again transforms criticism into support for his position. The strategy of his argument is to contest the meaning of the term 'mixed culture'. Treitschke opposes 'mixed culture' to 'amalgamations' that have happened slowly over a long period of time: 'mixed culture' in Treitschke's definition presupposes the recognizable existence of the constituting elements *as distinct*. This specific definition serves to invalidate Bresslau's critique. In the way that Treitschke suggests using the word, German culture is not a 'mixed' but an 'amalgamated' culture: the 'mixing' has proceeded so far that its elements are not distinguishable any more.

A significant inconsistency manifests itself when Treitschke argues that 'we have amalgamated the Christian and the classical ideals with our own essence' (Wesen) – namely 'Germanity' – and have thereby produced 'German culture' (Gesittung). 'Germanity', 'our own essence' appears here as one of the three ingredients that make up the 'amalgam' of 'German culture' (Gesittung). The extra-historical 'Wesen' of 'German culture' is in this conception joined by classical culture and Christianity – which are less essential but rather accidental additions – to form 'German culture'. This reflects a contradiction in Treitschke's concept of the nation as both historically constituted and transhistorical: while in the majority of Treitschke's formulations, *culture* (understood as the result of historical developments) appears as the essence of the *nation*, in this case 'Germanity' is presented as the essence and *antecedent of* 'culture' (namely being one of its three constituents).

Treitschke argues that because the 'German genius' is already an 'amalgam' it should not become a 'mixed culture', too. He concedes to Bresslau that there are already Jewish elements in the 'German genius' but turns this into an argument *against* any further 'mixing' of culture. The Jewish elements of 'German genius' are legitimate and beneficial only to the extent that they are not recognisable as such but mediated and completely amalgamated. While those elements that have already been added to the German amalgam are the best ones, those that have been rejected by Christianity are detrimental if they are allowed to constitute themselves independently as 'neo-Judaism', i.e. outside the seamless amalgam. They must not be accepted.

#### 2.2.3.4 ON THE AFFINITY BETWEEN THE GERMAN AND THE JEWISH SPIRIT

In opposition to Treitschke, Bamberger and Lazarus, both strongly patriotic writers, held the notion of a specific affinity between the German and the Jewish spirit. For *Bamberger*, the apparently 'German-Jewish' conflict is actually a 'German-German' conflict because it is characterized on both sides by the same 'bad habits' which are 'probably German': high emotionality in religious and cultural affairs and a tendency for indulging in prejudices and for voicing them out loud (Bamberger 1965:162). 'The thinking ones amongst the German Jews' tended not to get angry about the anti-Jewish campaigning because they 'know and appreciate their fellow Germans (ihre deutschen Landsleute)' to such an extent that they understand that the anti-Jewish sentiment is merely an unavoidable symptom of the Germans' character – a frame of mind that they share and, by and large, appreciate. Furthermore, they know – or feel anyway – that in sharing those bad German habits they also share in the responsibility for the anti-Semitic movement. Contrary to Treitschke's claim, Bamberger argues that the Jews have lived with no other people in such close communion.<sup>428</sup> 'They are Germanized not only on German soil but far beyond Germany's borders' (ibid.). The Jews' language anywhere in Europe is blended with German vocabulary, 'and he who talks about language talks about spirit (Geist)'.

Bamberger points out that the Jews had maintained themselves in Germany throughout the ages although their lives have always been made particularly difficult there. This 'drives one to the assumption' (ibid.:164) that the Jews must have been attracted by the Germans by 'commonalities in the fundamental character structure'. 'A mixture of heterogeneous and common spiritual characteristics' (ibid.:165) are at the basis of both mutual attraction and 'intimate animosity'. Bamberger explains:

The common trait is the fundamentally spiritual character: Jews and Germans are without doubt the two most spiritual nations of all times and places. (...) The inclination towards abstract thinking, one of the foundations of the spiritual outlook on life, is most developed in Jews and Germans (ibid.).

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<sup>428</sup> 'Denn mit keinem Volke haben sie sich auch nur entfernt so eng zusammengelebt, man koennte sagen identificirt, wie mit den Deutschen.'



As evidence he points out that nowhere except in Germany have ‘the spiritual views of Judaism, de-nationalized in the form of Christianity’, or ‘Spinoza’s speculative philosophy’, or ‘the philosophizing socialists Marx and Lassalle’, been received and embraced so thoroughly and won such a large following. Jews and Germans also share a ‘cosmopolitan aptitude’ and the ability to ‘depart from the given state of things’ (sich vom Gegebenen loszureissen). Bamberger concludes:

Both possess in common the mystery of speculation, in the philosophical as well as the economic sense of the word, which profound term covers not by coincidence both these operations of the mind, the philosophical and the mercantile (ibid.:165f).<sup>429</sup>

Bamberger’s argument is here excessively idealistic: the history of Jewish settlement and migration is certainly not a function of the mutual attraction or repulsion of ‘national spirits’.

Bamberger further claims that the Germans are ‘the most outstanding merchants of the world’ (ibid.:166), held down only by ‘territorial fragmentation (Kleinstaaterei)’ and ‘the arrogance of Junkers, civil servants or academics’.<sup>430</sup> ‘The attack on the “merchants” in general was the logical opening of the campaign against the Jews’, Bamberger argues. He implies that the attack on the Jews and their speculative-spiritual-commercial spirit is *eo facto* an attack on those Germans who – because they ‘possessed’ the same spiritual gifts – were the force behind German nation-building.

Despite the far-reaching identity of the German and the Jewish spirit in the ‘mystery of speculation’, Bamberger also recognizes differences. ‘Depth of thinking and wealth of feeling’<sup>431</sup> are more German, ‘hot-blooded, witty humour

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<sup>429</sup> Bamberger’s remark on abstract thinking and mercantile economy as two dimensions of ‘speculation’ (implying a common root) seems to echo a ‘young-Hegelian’ theme that can be found in Heine’s, Börne’s and (the young) Marx’s writings. It also anticipates an argument of Marxist theory as developed much later by George Thomson (1955) and Alfred Sohn-Rethel (1978). In their version of the argument, however, ‘abstract’ and philosophical thinking are understood as effects of the specific social practices of an emerging commodity economy – the Greeks of Miletos and Athens ‘invented philosophy’ not because they ‘owned’ the spirit of speculation but because they were at the forefront of developing commodity and money economy. In the young-Hegelian version of the idea echoed by Bamberger, the ‘mystery of speculation’ is simply ‘possessed’ by some peoples, not by others.

<sup>430</sup> The reference to the *Kleinstaaterei* serves as a reminder that the prospect of economic expansion was one of the main driving forces behind national unification.

<sup>431</sup> ‘Gedankentiefe und Empfindungsfülle’

merging into frivolity'<sup>432</sup> are more Jewish (ibid.:166). Bamberger illustrates his conception of difference and affinity with two examples of Jewish-Germanness: Heinrich Heine represents a 'peculiar blend' of the deep and the frivolous path to speculative transcendence. Those who rejected Heine for being witty as well as deep actually acted against 'the German spirit': they 'granted German citizenship to the totally un-German sentiment of chauvinism and ostracized the liberal humane and truthful spirit of our classic literature' (ibid.:167). A contrasting model case of German-Jewish spiritual blending is the liberal parliamentarian Lasker, portrayed by Bamberger as a grave, ascetic idealist. Lasker's character is linked to the political framework defined by Bismarck:

When the great realist Bismarck managed to move German politics from the world of German abstraction onto the concrete grounds of power, he enrolled into his vast project the nation's idealistic drive for great creation and high legislative aims. This was Lasker's great time of fighting for German idealism with the brightest weapons of Jewish dialectics while following the lead of realism (...)

Bamberger remarks in a bitter tone that only after Bismarck turned against his 'idealistic ally' (ibid.:168) did the majority of the nation reproach him for the same 'slightly abstract moral outrage (Entrüstung)' for which they had previously praised him. Bamberger's presentation of the two very different German-Jewish individuals, Heine and Lasker, suggests that both were able to contribute significantly to German culture and politics because they combined the different strengths of the two cultures: they managed to put their particularity into the service of their affinity.

*Lazarus* also argues that there is a 'particular, deep and momentous affinity ... between the Germanic and the Jewish spirit'. This affinity found particular expression in scholarly research on the Old Testament (*Lazarus* 1880:32) which blossomed in the context of German culture more than any other. Due to this affinity, Jews are so devoted to both reception and production of German culture, that 'an inner separation from it appears to them totally unthinkable and incomprehensible'. *Lazarus* argues that

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<sup>432</sup> 'schnellbluetigen, kecken, bis zur Frivolität gesteigerten Humor'

in all religions, religiosity itself (*Religiosität selbst*) is the ultimate and the deepest and what is common to all of them. It is what strives towards the highest in humanity (*dem Höchsten im Menschenthum zustrebende*) (*ibid.*:33).

He separates *Religiosität* – being religious and feeling in a religious way – from the *actual content* of any specific religion and argues that every human being can revere the *Religiosität* of others irrespective of the specific content of their religion. He concludes from this that Jews might not directly take sides and interfere in confessional debates and struggles within the church, but hope for and support the victory of ‘what will be the best of every church’, namely ‘taking sides with whatever represents the higher, more dignified, more beneficial stage of the religious development of humanity’ (*ibid.*:32), trusting in ‘reason and the future’ (*ibid.*:33). Lazarus seems not to be aware that this is a *de facto* Protestant conception which contradicts his profession of neutrality in confessional affairs. The Jews ‘drink daily from the wellsprings of the German spirit, one of whose deepest sources is Christianity’ and would not therefore slander Christianity. Lazarus argues that the animosity between Christians and Jews is a residue of a conflict that goes back to the origins of Christianity: ‘When, in the beginning, the new religious community (*Glaubensgemeinschaft*) split from the old one, of course there were animosity and bitterness.’ Lazarus suggests that the animosity between Rome and the Reformation had the same psychological origins as the earlier conflict between Jews and Christians: ‘And I am asking in turn, are not the same psychological laws valid for all times, do not the same causes have the same effects?’ (*ibid.*:33f)

Lazarus quotes Luther’s formulation that the ‘Papists’ had treated the Jews like dogs not like human beings and exclaims: ‘This is over!’ Likewise, Jews also have for a long time now demonstrated that they consider Christian moral theory identical to their own and have no hard feelings towards Christianity: ‘Would a mother despise her own child?’ (*ibid.*:34)

#### 2.2.4 The Jewish economic spirit and the German spirit of work

References to the economic role of the Jews tended to dominate many anti-Jewish publications of the time and seem to have been one of the more popular (or populist) aspects of anti-Judaism and/or anti-Semitism.<sup>433</sup> This includes both specific claims about the Jewish role in the financial economic sphere or the alleged role of the Jews in crises like the *Gruenderkrach*<sup>434</sup> as well as speculations about the Jewish economic spirit in the widest sense. The topic figures remarkably little in Treitschke's contributions to the *Streit*: apart from one mention of Jewish 'cosmopolitan financial powers' (Treitschke 1896c:50), he dedicates only one sequence to the issue in the first contribution (see below), in the context of the discussion of the harmful Jewish influence on German culture.<sup>435</sup> Treitschke's reluctance to elaborate on 'the economic issue' in his subsequent contributions will be discussed later, especially in the light of the responses; many respondents did take the point very seriously and discussed it in more detail.

Treitschke's comment on the Jews' influence on the economy shows the cautious ambivalence typical of much of Treitschke's discourse:

There is no German merchant city that does not count many honest, respectable Jewish firms among its number. But it cannot be denied that the Semites (das Semitentum) have contributed a large part to the dishonesty and deception (Lug und Trug) and the bold greediness (frechen Gier) of the boom-time mischief (Gruender-Unwesen), and that they share heavily in the guilt for the contemptible materialism of our age which regards every kind of work only as business (Geschäft) and threatens to suffocate our people's ancient good-natured willingness to work (die alte gemuethliche Arbeitsfreudigkeit unseres Volkes); the Jewish usurer sits in thousands of German villages (Treitschke 1896a:24f).<sup>436</sup>

In this paragraph, Treitschke distinguishes three categories of Jewish economic activity:

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<sup>433</sup> This is a hypothesis that I hope to be able to examine on a later occasion.

<sup>434</sup> This was a principal obsession of Glagau especially.

<sup>435</sup> Treitschke reproaches Börne and Heine for slandering 'the country that protects them' and adds that such 'contempt for the German Goyim' is 'not the opinion of a single fanatic'. The alleged Jewish role in the 'Gruender-Unwesen' comes from their 'contempt for the German Goyim', i.e. Treitschke claims to be able to explain the Jews' (alleged) economic behaviour in terms of *Volksggeist*, i.e. ethno-psychological terms.

<sup>436</sup> Cassel remarked drily: 'It is really not fun these days to run a pawnshop' (Cassel 1880:17).

- first, honest and respectable Jewish firms in merchant cities, i.e. representatives of traditional merchant capital.
- Second, dishonest, deceitful and greedy Jews involved in the largely unsuccessful 'Gruender-'boom, i.e. representatives of portions of such capital that is being invested in new economic enterprises (typically joint stock companies) at high risk – so called 'speculation'.
- Third, the classic figure of the Jewish small town usurer who plays a role in the transformation of 'ständische', artisanal production into modern, capitalist production based on waged labour.

Treitschke discusses all three types of Jewish economic engagement in terms of 'spirit': the merchant capitalist is characterized by honesty and respectability, the 'Gruender' by greed, and the usurer 'threatens to suffocate our people's ancient good-natured willingness to work'.

'Arbeitsfreudigkeit' – literally 'willingness' or 'eagerness to work' – has a resonance of 'Arbeitsfreude' which means experiencing joy (Freude) in the working process.<sup>437</sup> 'Gemüthlich' (here translated as 'good-natured') reinforces the 'spiritual' connotation.<sup>438</sup> Those, whose attitude has become 'Judaized', see work only under the perspective of 'Geschäft', i.e. of (commodity) exchange. Treitschke's terminology points to an idealized notion of work in an imaginary age when people would have been working for the sheer joy of it.<sup>439</sup> Treitschke is not able to distinguish capitalist from pre-capitalist forms of commodity economy; he ignores the obvious fact that medieval artisans also produced things in order to sell them. The grain of truth in Treitschke's statement is, though, that working is in many ways even less a source of 'joy' in modern times than before.

<sup>437</sup> The most important formulation of the concept of 'Arbeitsfreude' is by Heinrich Riehl (1861) (cp. Campbell 1989). Dorpalen points out that Treitschke's reference to '*gutmuethige Arbeitsfreudigkeit*' relates to his concept of a harmonic but hierarchical society: as long as the working classes will find 'happiness' in their subordinate function – working – and do not start being envious of 'the few thousands' (who do the thinking, painting etc.) the continued existence of the social hierarchy is safe (Dorpalen 1957:242).

<sup>438</sup> The meaning of 'Gemüeth' lies in between *mind, character, nature, soul, disposition, warm-heartedness* and *sentiment*.

<sup>439</sup> It is safe to assume that the necessity to work has throughout human history been experienced as suffering (*laborare*) rather than 'joy', and it is capitalist modernity that has first opened the *actual possibility* (ironically, against itself, and as its own negation) of a human world that would reduce the pains of *laborare* to the unavoidable minimum and would make the old dream of doing things for the sheer joy of it a real perspective (for the many rather than for those small

Treitschke blames this on the domination of production by 'Geschäft'<sup>440</sup> and describes this as a problem of *false*, namely *Jewish* 'spirit'.<sup>441</sup>

Treitschke's respondents commented widely on both aspects of this brief statement:

- the issue of the Jewish part in the 'Gruender-Unwesen'
- and what the wider issue of 'the contemptible materialism of the modern age' has got to do with the emancipation of the Jews.

*Manuel Joël* stated that amongst the 'Gruender' there have been many Jews 'simply because amongst the Jews there are many merchants'. He adds that some of them 'would be even more inclined to become presidents, senior civil servant, staff officer, senior postal civil servant etc.' if they only had a chance to.<sup>442</sup>

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élites who always found ways to organize for themselves leisurely anticipations of a humane existence); cp. Postone (1993) on Marx's take on this idea, and Campbell (1989) on Fourier's.<sup>440</sup> Treitschke seems to understand capitalism as a dictatorship of 'business' over 'production'. Again there is a grain of truth in this: it was one of the stages of the emergence of the capitalist mode of production that production was subsumed under a type of relations (the commodity form) that historically has emerged from trade – however, this does not sufficiently describe its essence.

<sup>441</sup> A leader (Leitartikel) in 'Deutsche Wacht' from May 1880 is much more explicit than Treitschke's remarks thanks to its use of the terminology of political economy (this article, written either by Marr or, more probably, by Naudh/Nordmann – Marr seems to have been replaced as editor as early as April 1880, judging from comments in the journal – does not directly refer to the *Streit*). It is argued that 'legal equality of Jews and Christians is un-ethical (ethisch unfassbar) and anti-national (antivolksrechtsthuemlich)' because '(t)he Jews never aim at the production of "useful values (nuetzlicher Werthe)" but only for profit. ... Jews as socialists ... have invented "capitalism" as a historical-economical point of attack in order to deflect attention from distribution and try to blame all hate on industry' (Deutsche Wacht 1880:435; 437f). While 'capitalism' – a conceptual fabrication by Jewish socialists – is a 'Popanz' (paper tiger, smokescreen), the real 'enemy of the nation' (ibid.:438) is 'egotistic commercialism (das selbstsuechtige Krämerthum)', namely the Jews. 'In earlier times' (the author seems to be thinking of the period of mercantilism) inviting Jews into the country was thought to be economically advantageous because of the money the Jews would bring with them. This was mistaken however because 'they do not use money productively but only for haggling (Schacher)' (ibid.:439). The author proposes that intermediate trade (Zwischenhandel) should be content with 'calculating the ... costs for transportation, storage and loss of commodities as well as the average interest to be charged on the stored commodity capital' (ibid.: 442), implying thereby that intermediate trade enriches itself by receiving much higher amounts of money and thus 'destroys the balance of production and consumption'. The import of foreign goods 'tyrannizes' the domestic market, destroys national consciousness and 'promotes the international (das Internationale)'. The tyranny of intermediate trade reduces general wealth and therewith 'increases the proletariat which is the greatest enemy of any state order' ('proletariat' means here 'the poor'). The article concludes that intermediate trade 'is thus an enemy of state, nation and society. ... Not capitalism ... but commercial capitalism ... has to be fought.' The author argues that only if the state regulated trade accordingly, the Jews could begin to 'develop', 'overcome their faults' and begin to participate in 'patriotic culture and greatness'. Only then they could 'earn' the emancipation that has been granted to them undeservedly (ibid.: 443).

<sup>442</sup> Joël argues that the claim of a particular Jewish materialism is disproven by the fact of Jewish refusal to convert when conversion would improve career choices. Reproaching the Jews both for not giving up Judaism and for materialist greed is therefore inconsistent (Joël 1965:22f).

*Oppenheim* (1880:20) also writes that the Jews have been involved in ‘Gruendungen’ merely to the extent of their share in the economy in general. He argues, however, that due to their relatively higher economic skills they did not typically belong to those who ‘came closest to overstepping the mark (den Bogen am schärfsten spannten)’. He thus turns the stereotype of the Jewish superiority in business into a virtue and argues that adventurous and speculative enterprises were led by – less skilled and less solid – non-Jews.

The tone of *Harry Bresslau*’s answer somewhat differs from the former in expressing support for Treitschke’s attack on ‘the Jewish *Gruender* and usurers’ (Bresslau 1965a:65). However, he adds that there are also many Christian *Gruender*, and argues that the higher proportion of Jews in the financial sphere in general has its cause in medieval laws that excluded them from a number of other occupations. ‘What I miss in your elaborations, though, is any positive suggestion’ (ibid.:66). Bresslau accuses Treitschke of discouraging ‘those decent men who – as you emphasize yourself – work against usury to the best of their ability in their circles’. Bresslau seems to accept here silently Treitschke’s notion of Jewish group responsibility, but he leaves open what its practical relevance should be: why for example would a professor of history have a particularly good chance to convert a ‘speculator’ to ‘decent’ banking practices just because both happen to be Jewish? Bresslau adds that ‘not a single Jewish or Christian usurer or *Gruender* would mend his ways because of an article like yours’ (ibid.:67). Bresslau suggests that straightforward legislation would be most effective.

The *AZ* carried the translation of an article by ‘Valbert’ (i.e. the popular French novelist, Cherbuliez)<sup>443</sup> (*AZ* 23.3.1880, No. 12:177f). ‘Valbert’ mocks:

When a truly German cobbler makes a pair of shoes he does not only put his consciousness into them but his soul, too, and even some poetry. Alas! Since the German cobblers allowed the deplorable propaganda of the sons of Abraham to corrupt them, they see in a pair of shoes only a business (*Geschäft*), because for the Jews the world only consists of business and calculation.

Philippson adds that Treitschke’s emotional rhetoric sits oddly with the fact that ‘since 1870, Treitschke kept preaching realism in politics’ and demanded that ‘idealist dreaming’ end (*AZ* 1880:178). Similarly, *Oppenheim* (1880:20) claims

that the economic idealism of Treitschke's recent position brings him 'into the realm of *Kathedersozialisten*' as well as that of the 'apologists of the guild system (Zuenftler)' against both of which Treitschke had been renowned for fighting aggressively.<sup>444</sup>

Oppenheim suggests that work should be a 'business' rather than a 'feudal or state service'. He rejects the answer that 'Treitschke and the *Kathedersozialisten*' would have given: that it should be 'an ethical achievement (Leistung)'. Oppenheim admits that 'everything has an ethical dimension' but suggests that boots made by a cobbler 'who goes about his work as a business (seine Arbeit geschäftlich betreibt)' are probably better than boots made from 'ethical consciousness'.

Oppenheim states that even if it was true that trade and business have lost their 'Gemüthlichkeit' ('if there ever was any') then it would be quite another thing to prove that the Jews are responsible for this loss. He writes that even the most conservative peasant has no problem seeing his produce as commodities 'and his calculation of their prices is affected by neither the songs of the lark nor those of a whole forest of German poets, whom he otherwise might highly appreciate'. The mere fact that the product of work is a commodity does not make production more or less ethical. Oppenheim sees the 'ethical (sittliche)' critique of capitalist production as a cheap excuse for lazy people who fail to adopt to the standards and expectations of modern society:

The whining about the lack of pleasantness (Ungemüthlichkeit) of modern production comes from the bunglers (Stuemper) who fail to produce up to date products and who would be saved if they could hide behind the privileges of a guild or a system of protective customs (ibid.:20).

Oppenheim points out that already in the 1770s when guilds in France were abolished under Turgot the guild masters understood '*Gemüthlichkeit* of work to mean police protection for the right to use force and exclusion (Zwangs- und Bannrechte)' (italics added). Oppenheim suggests that 'the fertile field of the joy of labour (Arbeitsfreudigkeit)' lies in meeting the increasingly sophisticated and

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<sup>443</sup> from the *Revue des deux mondes*, March 1<sup>st</sup>

<sup>444</sup> Treitschke's 'Socialism and its patrons' (1874) took up arguments previously formulated by Oppenheim.



diverse demands of the consumers rather than in backwards oriented 'reminiscences'.

Even now the apprentices' question (Lehrlingsfrage) and some related issues pose numerous serious problems because the crafts have lost their ability to help themselves, having been spoiled and incapacitated through centuries of privileges and police protection. I bet ten against one that all those apologists of the guild system (Zuenftler) who seek their salvation in reactionary fraternities (Verbruederungen) and run to join Stöcker and sing the tune of 'the evil Jews' are incompetent and unreliable workers in their trade. ... Does Herr von Treitschke want to enlist these people for his Christian-Germanic brigade, too?

Against Treitschke's revisionism, Oppenheim defends the liberal modernizing thrust of creating dynamic economic relations by removing *ancien régime* structures and regulations.<sup>445</sup>

Like Oppenheim, *Ludwig Bamberger* warned Treitschke from deviating not only from religious and cultural tolerance, but also from freedom of property as another tenet of liberalism:

Hopefully Herr von Treitschke, who used to profess sound economic principles, will not intend making concessions to the simplistic delusion (plumpen Wahnvorstellung) – currently coming back into fashion – that those who make money through their labour exploit society and do not through their services make society so much richer (Bamberger 1965:164).

Bamberger refers in his argument to the first section of Treitschke's text 'Our prospects' (Treitschke 1896a) in which Treitschke criticized – amongst other things – the anti-German current in the political debate in Russia. Bamberger suggests that 'the Russian Treitschkes' declared the Germans to be 'Russia's misfortune' just as Treitschke declared the Jews to be Germany's (ibid.:163). Like the anti-Jewish agitation in Germany, the anti-German agitation in Russia 'merely decorates ancient prejudices and passions with the tinsel of patriotic phraseology'. Their historical point of reference is the immigration of poor Germans at the time of the Reformation, who succeeded in Russia 'through skill, industriousness and moderation'.

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<sup>445</sup> The most important evidence that this was indeed one of the motivations crucial to the liberal fight against anti-Semitism is the *Declaration of the Notables* that enumerates as 'the ground of our common life' 'respect for every denomination; equal right; equal sun in competition; equal recognition of merit and achievement' (see above 2.2.1.4).

The Russian people had to acknowledge these advantages of the 'intruders' but despised them even more for that reason. Since those times it remained an established truth in the thinking of the common man that the Germans 'destroy national religion and appropriate the riches of the country'. The more or less learned Moscow pan-Slavists have only recently begun to repeat this notion with enormously pompous and cheap moral outrage and scholarly flim-flam (ibid.).

Bamberger draws the analogy between Germans in Russia and Jews in Germany:

The well-being of the Jewish Germans no more prevents that of Christian Germans than industrious, clever and economical Russians are prevented in Russia by Germans from enjoying the fruits of their work and from becoming cultured and wealthy (ibid.).

Bamberger presents the conflict in both instances as based on the different economic attitudes of a traditional population and an immigrant group that has a modernizing impact on economic life characterized by industriousness, moderation and rationality. Bamberger states that the origin of national-religious prejudice is economic and strongly affirms the modern economic spirit. He asserts that the 'activity and wealth of the German settlers in Russia benefit Russian culture as a whole' (ibid.:164) just as 'the intellectual and economic activity of German Jews benefits the German State and German society'.

Bamberger's emphasis on economic attitudes indicates clearly that liberal opposition to anti-Semitic agitation took the latter's 'anti-capitalist' and populist aspects very seriously.<sup>446</sup> Treitschke certainly did not anticipate (and even less hope for) any socialist side-effects of anti-Semitism.

The anti-capitalist side of anti-Semitism that Treitschke displayed in his first contribution but subsequently chose not to articulate further (silently accepting the fierce criticism of fellow liberals such as Oppenheim and Bamberger) occupies much more space and is further developed in the contributions by Naudh and Endner.

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<sup>446</sup> In a similar if curiously reversed fashion, analyses by Social-Democrats in the following decades occasionally speculated that anti-Semitic agitation would indirectly (and ironically, i.e. against itself) further socialist consciousness amongst *non-working class* poor (i.e. those not accessible to Social-Democratic teaching) by proving itself to be an inadequate (namely petty bourgeois) criticism of capitalist society. Some liberals and some socialists shared the notion that anti-Semitic anti-capitalism would by necessity prepare the ground for a more adequate, or more dangerous, namely proletarian anti-capitalism (cp. Wistrich 1982:99).

For Naudh, it is a fact of history that the Jews invented ‘Manchesterism’ 2000 years ago and that even then an anti-Jewish, anti-capitalist movement led by a man called Jesus struggled against it:

Christianity with its imperative of love (*Gesetz der Liebe*) was the revolution *against* the Jewish principle of arrogance and exploitation and indeed, like every revolution, it started its struggle from within. Jesus confronted a Judaism which was oriented towards worldly benefits – the religion of Manchesterism (*Manchesterthum*) – with transcendental communism and thus was welcomed first by the poor – least, however, by the Jewish poor. A gospel of worldly uselessness did not really appeal to their tastes (Naudh 1965:185f; *italics in the original*).

For Naudh, the anti-Jewish movement of the present is similarly motivated:

Although 80 Germans might manage to be able to feed one unproductive Jew, the burden is distributed too unevenly over the country. In Berlin for example – and Berlin shows not yet the most unfortunate ratio – only eighteen locals (*Berliner*) have to sustain one Jew, who on average might perhaps appropriate more than is left to his breadwinners (*Ernährern*) (*ibid.*:196).

Naudh continues that out of these eighteen Berliners only five are fit for work ‘at most’, so that, according to Naudh’s calculation, ‘the Jew consumes at least a fifth of the productive power (*der werbenden Kraft*) of the Berliners’.

Because of the ‘infinite of Jewish immigration (*Zuschub*)’ which ‘accelerates progressively’, the Germans will be ‘helots of the Jews’ in another twenty years. They will be ‘run down (*heruntergekommen*) morally as much as economically’. Naudh concludes that

it follows from the preceding that we can neither allow the Jews active participation in the affairs of the state, nor – due to their inherited hostile morality (*Sittlichkeit*) - can we tolerate them next to us in such [large] numbers (*ibid.*).

In other words, exclusion of Jews from the state-political sphere needs to be complemented by exclusion from civil society.<sup>447</sup>

Another economic aspect was emphasized by *Wilhelm Endner* – making the Jews productive:<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>447</sup> For Naudh’s practical conclusions see *chapter 2.2.10.4*.

We would not mind, if Berlin's Jewry (from Victoriastrasse just as from Königstrasse) would head off and settle for example in the Tucheler or Lueneburger heath, if Cohn became a ploughman, Abrahamson a thresher, if Philippsen would establish himself as a blacksmith, Jacobson as a locksmith, Levyson as a roofer, if Bresslauer became a tar-cooker (Theerschweiler), Danziger a peat-cutter, Veilchenfeld a carpenter, Rosenbaum a bricklayer, if Lilienthal would be working on the street, Löwe, Wolf, Bär and Hirsch at the ram and so on (Endner 1965:112).

He then made a whole list of suggestions how the Jews should accelerate their assimilation (ibid.:117f).<sup>449</sup> Endner is most adamant about the issue of taking up productive occupations:

Most of all, make sure *that the Jews become members of the working classes in the same ratio as the Germans are*; that they produce instead of merely enrich themselves through trade. Then the – until now justified – judgement that the Jews bleed the country white will possibly change (ibid.:118; italics in the original).<sup>450</sup>

Endner, who writes that he finds both Treitschke's and Stöcker's politics 'too moderate', must be understood as one of the less established, more populist and in that sense more 'radical' anti-Semites. Two aspects are particularly interesting from that perspective: for one, he rejects Bresslau's claim that the anti-Jewish attitude is 'basically' about race. Endner stresses that it is about cultural, economic and social questions no less than about race, and puts particular emphasis on the economic argument that the Jews are 'unproductive'. For

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<sup>448</sup> Endner made these remarks in the context of his rejection of Bresslau's reference to the existence of other ethnic minorities within Germany. Endner argues that the Wends in the Prussian district of Lausitz are the remnants of an indigenous 'tribe' in an area that was conquered by 'Germany' moving eastward and that continued to exist as a rural community, 'as a solid group (in compacter Masse)' (Endner 1965:111). By contrast, he argues that the Jews were not an enclave of a surviving indigenous ethnic minority but immigrants and do not live 'as a solid group' but 'dispersed anywhere amongst the Germans' (ibid.:112). Furthermore, the Wends are productive, the Jews are not.

<sup>449</sup> His suggestions included that the Sabbath should be moved to Sunday, specific Jewish holidays as well as ritual washings should be given up as well as any specific choice of food, circumcision, and membership in the 'Alliance Israelite Universelle', which he holds to be a Jewish nationalist institution incompatible with German nationality.

<sup>450</sup> Lazarus (1880:27) takes up the issue that only few Jews went into agriculture even after the laws that had barred Jews from doing so had been abolished. He writes that this statistical fact does not prove the alleged Jewish unwillingness to turn to 'productive work'. One should look at not the absolute numbers of Jews and Christians in agriculture, but the numbers of urban residents moving to the countryside and then examine how many of them are Jewish and how many are Christian. His argument implies that in times of overall decreasing significance of agriculture a movement towards the countryside amongst any group of the urban population would be minute.

Endner, the 'Jewish element' is to be 'eliminated' not so much because the Jews constitute another race<sup>451</sup> but because their racial difference *manifests itself in specific cultural-social practices*, most prominently their being 'unproductive'. Endner also seems to hold that persons of non-Jewish (or non-'Semitic') stock also fall under the category 'Jews' (while 'Semites' is for him the properly racial category) as soon as they display (cultural-economic) 'Jewish characteristics'. For Endner, the problem is not 'race' but cultural – in particular economic – behaviour, which is only subsequently articulated or explained in the language of 'race'.

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<sup>451</sup> This becomes clear from Endner's comparing the Jews to the Wends: the Wends are also of a different 'race', but Endner has no problem with them.

### 2.2.5 State, nation, race, religion

In a sense, the issues addressed in this chapter form the hard core of the *Streit*. On the one hand, as I will argue later on, conflicting constellations of the concepts *state, nation, race, religion* are at the heart of what the *Streit* was ‘actually’ about; on the other hand, these issues attracted a large number of more coherent treatments including some by leading scholars of the time: the political analyses by Treitschke, Bresslau, Bamberger, Oppenheim and Naudh are joined by the more scholarly contributions in particular by Lazarus, Cohen and Mommsen. The statements of the latter differ in style from most of the journalistic pamphlet material discussed so far. Given this, the mode of the presentation will also slightly differ from the surrounding chapters in giving larger and more substantial extracts from the more theoretical passages of some of the contributions.

#### 2.2.5.1 TREITSCHKE: PATRIOTISM AS *STAATSGESINNUNG*

Two thirds of the text, ‘Our Prospects’ from November 1879 are actually not about the ‘Jewish question’ or any domestic, social affairs at all but about international, or rather inter-Imperial relations. Although this part of the text is generally not given much attention, it contains important clues about Treitschke’s overall political conception and allows an immediate contextualization of what Treitschke has to say about the ‘Jewish question’. Treitschke makes explicit that for him both fields of discussion are closely related and he even seems to indicate that the ‘domestic’ problems (the ‘Jewish question’; the relation of state, nation and culture) are given their importance through and in the ‘global’ context (about which he actually fills twice as many pages).<sup>452</sup>

Treitschke writes about the final stage of the Balkan crisis and the outcomes of the *Berlin Congress* of June and July 1878. On this occasion Bismarck managed to establish himself as arbiter between England and Austria who opposed growing Russian influence in the Balkans after a successful Russian

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<sup>452</sup> Treitschke himself as well as his editor found these considerations on daily affairs important enough to include them unabridged in the volume ‘*Deutsche Kämpfe, Neue Folge*’ (Treitschke 1896).

military intervention in a Serbian-Turkish conflict (Treitschke 1896a:5). Treitschke comments on the ill-feeling between Germany and Russia that originated after the Berlin conference when Russia had to sacrifice some of its military spoils from the Balkan war to the 'balance of powers' as brokered by Bismarck. Treitschke points out that the two states are allies by tradition as well as by mutual benefit and blames the temporary ill-feeling on the 'blind spitefulness' rooted in the 'mighty national passions of the Russian people' or at least of far-reaching influential parties among them (ibid.:1). Treitschke states that the Russian Empire is in the process of giving up its aim of hegemony in the Baltic and is instead turning its attention southwards. Treitschke describes this Imperial re-orientation – without actually using these words – as a process of national awakening, with 'public opinion' ahead of the state's politics; the 'passionate desire of the nation' (still 'youthful' and 'immature', ibid.:3) and the 'propaganda of Pan-Slavism' drove the Tsar into conflict with the Ottoman Empire.

Treitschke draws an enthusiastic portrayal of Bismarck's presidency of the Berlin conference: Bismarck saved the Russians the largest part of their spoils while Britain and Austria initially aimed at annulling the results of the Balkan war completely so as to save the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The driving force behind the German position was, according to Treitschke, the wish to see 'the liberation of the Balkan-Christians from unbearable [Turkish] pressure' (ibid.:5). The driving force behind Russian popular mood is, however, not sympathy for the Christians of the Balkans but Pan-Slavism. Russian public opinion opposed the Tsar's diplomacy after the war and even called for war against Germany because the war-aims of pan-Slavism were not fulfilled. Additionally, as Treitschke notes, popular anger was fuelled by the fact that the newly created nation-states in the Balkans had 'constitutional forms of state' which Russia still lacked (ibid.:8). The twofold disappointment after the military triumph operated like a catalyst:

And just like the innermost secrets (*Herzensgeheimnisse*) of man always are betrayed (*sich verrathen*) in anger, so the pan-Slavists' deep-rooted

(eingefleischter) hate of Germans came to the fore in measureless force (ibid.).<sup>453</sup>

While Treitschke seemed sympathetic to the process of Russia orienting its politics towards the Balkans rather than the Baltic, he is less than sympathetic to the more general aspects of pan-Slavism. However, he applauds the majority of public opinion in Germany for being sympathetic to the politics of the Russian *state*. Treitschke adds that only some 'isolated adherents of the old liberal school' and some 'dogged' progressives did not support Russia in the Balkan war (ibid.:9). He argues for a renewed alliance of the 'three imperial powers' (Germany, Austria and Russia) conditional on pan-Slavism not becoming official Russian doctrine (ibid.:11).

Treitschke sees as the main result of the Berlin conference that Britain, a traditional defender of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, gave up this position. He takes it as a fact that the latter will be divided between the European powers in due course: 'In the age of the railway the ideas and projects of the epoch of the crusades are resurgent' (ibid.:12). Treitschke argues that England and Russia as the main players should be able to come to a peaceful agreement because both had 'to fear a common enemy in the fanaticism of Islam' but 'unfortunately reason alone does not decide about the fates of peoples' (ibid.:13f). Conflict is unavoidable because of on one side the 'enormous expansive power of Slavdom', and on the other side the 'far more insatiable greed for territory of English commercial policy' looking for markets. Treitschke anticipates a European coalition to prevent British hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In this context he moves to a second element of the results of the Berlin conference, the incorporation of Bosnia into the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Treitschke's assessment of this is ambivalent; he appreciates as an immediate benefit that the conquest has boosted national self-consciousness:

One has started again to believe in the state and its good fortunes; one can hear from Vienna articulations of a healthy patriotic pride, a vital Austrian sense of statehood (*Staatsgesinnung*) more often now than since many years ago (ibid.:15).

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<sup>453</sup> The formulation points to an aspect of Treitschke's method. He 'reads' events, particularly critical events, as the revelation of inner essence of the historical actors and illustrates his 'reading history' with anthropological-psychological clichés.



On the other hand, he points out the administrative problems of governing this remote province, and the subsequent necessity for the Dual Monarchy to be engaged in Balkan politics to make Bosnia economically viable; Austria is becoming a 'Balkan-state'.

Taken together, Treitschke's comments on the political situation at large allow for some first conclusions about his conception of state and nation. In keeping with his background as a supporter of 'kleindeutsche' policy – as opposed to pan-Germanism – he rejects pan-Slavism. The 'liberation' of Christianity from Ottoman rule has his sympathy, although this seems not a priority. As in the case of Austria, he appreciates military success as a contributor to 'healthy patriotism', which he defines as 'Staatsgesinnung', i.e. loyalty and identification with a *state*, which does not necessarily imply a nation-state. In general, he seems to support the existence of Empires as long as they are viable economically and administratively and supported by 'public opinion'. Since this is not the case for the Ottoman Empire, the latter's days are numbered. He discerns a potential for difficulties in the case of Austria-Hungary, while critical difficulties are already apparent in the case of Russia. While Russia is characterized as a potential troublemaker because of the popularity of the 'dreamings' and 'fairy tales' of pan-Slavism, Treitschke speaks of England with hostility because of the uniquely commercial character of its politics. All in all, Treitschke appears here as a supporter of nationalism as *state patriotism*, i.e. nationalism as the basis of *Staatsgesinnung*. Economic viability is mentioned repeatedly as a key category, although he refers also to Christianity and the culture of the 'occident'. Only when a state does not manage to mobilize the necessary patriotic support of its citizens, as in the Turkish case, does it appear as a legitimate prey to destabilizing forces such as other nations' nationalisms.

### 2.2.5.2 TREITSCHKE: THE CHRISTIAN NATION

Although Treitschke's *patriotism* translates as 'Staatsgesinnung', in his discussion of the 'Jewish Question' Treitschke refers to Germany as a 'Christian nation':

The moment emancipation was gained the Jews insisted boldly on their 'certificate' ('Schein'), demanded literal parity in everything, forgetful of the fact that we Germans are, after all, a Christian nation (ein christliches Volk) and that the Jews are only a minority amongst us. It has happened that the removal of Christian pictures was demanded, and even the celebration of the Sabbath in mixed schools (Treitschke 1896a:26).

The concept of 'christliches Volk' blurs the boundaries between the realms of, on the one hand, state, citizenship and emancipation and, on the other hand, morality and religion.<sup>454</sup> Treitschke rejects any challenge to the Christian character of the nation.<sup>455</sup> His formulations suggest that the Jews make wholly unreasonable demands.<sup>456</sup>

Nevertheless, Treitschke also insists that emancipation is crucial for the character of the German *state*:

Among those who understand (unter Verständigen), there can be no talk of an abolition or even of a limitation of the emancipation; that would be an obvious injustice, a betrayal of the fine traditions of our state, and would accentuate rather than mitigate the national contrast (den nationalen Gegensatz) which torments us (ibid.:27).

Treitschke connects his argument here to the liberal tradition that sees in the state a means to 'harmonize' civil society, 'mitigating' its 'contrasts'. He characterizes the German *nation* as Christian, the German *state* as liberal.

In his third contribution, Treitschke elaborates on this conception and also makes more explicit remarks on the Jews. He claims that the relatively higher increase rate of the Jewish population warrants a 'momentous change in our social life' (Treitschke 1896c:49). He states that 'this tribe' includes 'apart from

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<sup>454</sup> Meyer argued in his response to Treitschke that the Sabbath is a bulwark of idealism and of the idea of God, and thus against atheism and materialism. Christian head-teachers who prevent children from celebrating the Sabbath promoted materialism (Meyer 1880a:10).

<sup>455</sup> This leads him to provocative claims such as that the emancipated Jews demand 'literal parity' (buchstäbliche Parität).

<sup>456</sup> The examples he gives, however, are quite telling: the removal of Christian pictures (from public buildings or state schools) seems in perfect keeping with the concept that state and public sphere be secular.

many honourable, fully patriotic people also a bunch of unreconstructed Orientals' as well as 'a swarm of rootless (heimathlosen) international journalists', 'large cosmopolitan financial powers', 'some simply asocial (gemeinschädliche) elements' (ibid.:50) and criminals. Although legal emancipation has been 'beneficial insofar as it took from the Jews all reason for legitimate complaint', it also 'made the mixing of blood more difficult, which has always been the most effective means of levelling tribal differences':

The numbers of conversions to Christianity have sharply decreased, and mixed marriage between Christians and Jews will remain a rare exception as long as our people holds its Christian beliefs sacred (ibid.).

Treitschke reaffirms his support for legal emancipation and for the mixing of 'blood' as a means of (national) amalgamation against tribal particularisms. At the same time, however, he reasserts strongly the incompatibility of the two religions.<sup>457</sup>

From amongst the four categories,

- blood/tribe/race,
- religion,
- nation and
- state,

nation and state appear as historical ends, the others as either means to these ends or obstacles to be overcome: for the sake of *nation-building*, blood/tribes/races should be 'mixed' and 'amalgamated'. The problem with the Jews is that their sticking to their old *religion* makes this amalgamation undesirable for the Christians who in turn have to stick to their (more modern) religion for the sake

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<sup>457</sup> Meyer points out that Treitschke's complaint that since emancipation conversions have become more rare contradicts his earlier claim that the Jews' old religion is respected as sacred (Treitschke 1896a:23; Meyer 1880b:7).

Naudh expresses 'the hope that his [Treitschke's] healthy German nature will more and more outgrow the liberal straight-jacket' (Naudh 1965:199). Naudh points to a small shift in Treitschke's argument between the first and the second contribution, which he interprets as the foreboding of a more fundamental shift to come: 'He [Treitschke] acknowledges now that the feeling of living unity that is necessary for national consciousness is incompatible with a contradiction in the most holy questions of the mind (Gemüth), and after more consideration about the issue, he will further acknowledge that this contradiction of the mind (gemüthliche Gegensatz) is a matter of natural disposition. Therefore it cannot be overcome by baptising, which always remains something external if it happens without the [natural/racial] disposition, contrary to the opinion that Treitschke [still] seems to hold. The spiritual (gemüthliche) and even the physical difference between Germans and Jews will always spoil the feeling of "living unity" (...)' (ibid.:200). Naudh suggests that Treitschke's insistence on a religious-spiritual difference will inevitably lead him to acknowledge biological/racial difference.

of *nation-state-formation*. The continued existence of the Jews as an ethno-religious group is therefore an obstacle for the constitution of the *nation-state*.

Treitschke continues:

The Jews owe gratitude to the new Germany for the work of liberation because the participation in governing the state is not at all a natural right of all inhabitants but is decided freely by every state (ibid.).<sup>458</sup>

Treitschke complains that the Jews not only show a lack of gratitude, but even criticize Christian dogma (Glaubenslehre). In some cases, Treitschke claims they try to limit the Christian's freedom of belief 'in the name of tolerance' – for example when Jews complain about Christian school teachers teaching that the Jews crucified Jesus.<sup>459</sup> Treitschke concludes that the beginnings of the 'terrorism of a busy minority' must not be encouraged through 'cowardly patience' on the side of 'us Christians' (ibid.:51).<sup>460</sup> Treitschke may be less concerned with the mere truth about issues such as who actually killed Jesus, than with the effects that questioning such truths may have on nation-building and state-formation.

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<sup>458</sup> Philippson comments that Treitschke's remark that the state had the 'natural right' to decide who takes part in its leadership is 'nonsense' (AZ, 17.2.1880, No 7:100).

<sup>459</sup> Meyer points out that Treitschke refers here to an incident that happened at the Catholic primary school in Linz on the Rhein that is also attended by Jewish children (Meyer 1880b:9f). The local synagogue complained that teachers used a book that stated that Jesus had been crucified by the Jews. (Obviously Jesus was crucified by the Roman administration, irrespective of whatever one might believe was the role played by different Jewish groups and institutions. The Gospels do not claim that 'the Jews' are responsible for the death of Jesus [only Paul in the first letter to the Thessalonians introduces this notion as a reaction to his own expulsion from Jerusalem]. The explanations that can be extrapolated from the Gospels are that the rich [the Sadducee high priests who were keen to preserve their alliance with Rome against popular opposition] wanted to get rid of a social rebel, and that the nationalist 'Zealots' preferred protecting one of their own – Jesus Barabbas – to saving the leader of a rival movement that made a point out of discouraging the poor from engaging in a 'national liberation' guerilla campaign that would end in defeat [cp. Thieme 1963:49f].)

The leadership of the synagogue in Linz also complained that another textbook contained the statement that all Jews dispersed over the earth followed the example of the biblical figure of Cain (AZ 23.3.1880, No 12).

<sup>460</sup> Philippson points out that Treitschke had argued in a way completely opposed to his current position only a few years before. In the context of the *Kulturkampf*, Treitschke had urged the state to break church influence on education in order to avoid a 'new religious war' and to assure that principles of peaceful toleration are central to education. Also in his earlier essay on 'Liberty', Treitschke had written that the 'moral content (sittliche Gehalt)' of Christianity had less and less to do with the actual church but was being represented by the (secular) people (AZ 2.3.1880, No 9:132).

### 2.2.5.3 PATRIOTIC CRITICISM OF 'EXAGGERATED NATIONALISM'

The rejection of Treitschke's nationalism as 'exaggerated' was something like the common denominator of most critical responses. The notion of 'exaggerated nationalism' presupposes – sometimes implicitly, often explicitly – a contrasting notion of not-exaggerated, i.e. 'healthy' nationalism or patriotism. A comment in the *AZ* (No 14, April 6, 1880:211) by Philippson who sees the 'nationality principle' as central to the problem touches on many of the issues at stake in the wider discussion. He presents himself as a supporter of the nationality principle who has argued for decades that the Jews should assimilate to the German, or whatever nation they happen to live in, and that this would not at all affect their Jewishness. He warns, however, that the nationality principle, when it is exaggerated, creates hate and division, as the case of Treitschke shows. Treitschke argues for the extinction of all Jewish particularity because he interprets all Jewish particularity as *national* particularity. Philippson rejects this and holds that a degree of particularity in one's way of life is necessary for the reproduction of *religious* particularity: any specific religion cannot exist without its specific institutional forms (ibid.:212) because 'religion that existed only in three or four abstract sentences would not persist'.<sup>461</sup>

Philippson writes<sup>462</sup> that 'pseudo-liberals' like Treitschke share with the ultra-montanists the goal of bringing down the liberal principle that legal and political equality override religion or confession which is a 'bulwark of the constitutional state (*Rechtsstaat*)' (ibid.:225). He argues that they fail to formulate concrete conclusions for strategic reasons: the anti-liberal strategy is to deliberately repeat the attack on the *Rechtsstaat* again and again until the general public has absorbed it 'like a sponge absorbs dirty water'. However, the fact that 'in all religions and confessions countless individuals have transcended clerical dogmas and forms' and 'the state in almost all civilized countries (*Culturländern*) fights the armies of the churches' makes this an anachronistic enterprise. Philippson warns that any violation of a 'great legal principle' will inevitably spread over the whole legal realm: 'partial violation' – such as abolition of civil rights only for the Jews – 'abolishes the principle as such'.

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<sup>461</sup> This seems to be an aside on the Kantian concept of religion as promoted by Cohen (Cohen 1965:126f; 146f).

Furthermore, Philippson argues that 'exaggerated nationalism' becomes 'despotism' as soon as it suppresses the development of individuality within the framework of legality (Recht). Turning against itself, nationalism mimics out of 'passionate blindness (leidenschaftliche Verblendung)' its opposite which is socialism.<sup>463</sup> Philippson rejects the claim that 'modern civilization' has a 'drive towards leveling out all differences between human beings'<sup>464</sup> and warns that moves to undermine the rule of law (Recht) and freedom might in the future unite into a 'Christian-Nationalist' party, which would damage both Christianity and the nation. Treitschke's argument already contained such a possibility in nuclear form. Philippson ends his comment on an optimistic tone implying that such 'anachronistic' endeavors would be but temporary.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>462</sup> This is taken from the continuation of the same essay in *AZ* 13.4.1880, No 15.

<sup>463</sup> Carl Vogt (probably the famous zoologist and 'physiological materialist', former member of the 1848 *Frankfurt Parliament*, who then held a professorship in Switzerland) also reproached Treitschke in a newspaper article (reprinted in the *AZ*, 6.4.1880, No 14:212) for 'excessive patriotism'. He describes him as a 'Slavonic German' who 'throws their race in the faces of the Hebrew Germans (der den von Hebräern gezeugten Deutschen ihre Race an den Kopf wirft)'. Vogt points to two different motivations for Treitschke's anti-Judaism: firstly, Treitschke is the 'mouthpiece of the country squires of the Brandenburg Marches (uckermärkischen Krautjunktums; *Uckermark* is a landscape north of Berlin)'. These are people who live beyond their means and therefore consider the 'economical, industrious and business-minded (geschäftsgewandte) Jews' their biggest enemy. Secondly, Treitschke is a professor: Christian scholars in Prussia have lost their monopoly on the profession just a few decades ago, and 'competition from Jews is growing because they are more versatile, faster in taking up a trend that is guaranteed to bring fame and they possess better means to survive the hard [unpaid] times of being a *Privatdozent*'. He adds that the Protestants in France have exactly the same role in academia that the Jews have in Germany.

<sup>464</sup> 'We think it is a mistake to ascribe to modern civilization the drive towards leveling out all differences between human beings (Nivellirungssucht). From antiquity and medieval barbarism large entities had developed that contained a vast diversity of unrefined forms as well as delusions, superstitions and tyranny. Civilization challenges these forms and their contents in order to destroy them. In doing so, it calls the true essence (eigentliche Wesen) and the thought content (gedankliche Gehalt) of those entities to new life which naturally also take on purer and more subtle forms. Everywhere this process is governed by the same rules of reason (Vernunft), taste, the incorporation [of the particular] into the general, and into the demands of the time. Civilization does not thus challenge the phenomena in themselves but merely what they came to be under the conditions of barbarism: only the latter brought them into contradiction with generality. Civilization rejuvenates and refreshes the life and the vitality of these historical phenomena. This is what also happened and continues to happen to Judaism' (ibid.:226).

<sup>465</sup> While Philippson defends here the liberal concept of the state, he pointed in another article (No 14, April 6, 1880:210), to a more general implication of the state in anti-Judaism: he asserts that the 'lust for conversion (Bekehrungslust)', that can be observed in the 'most recent movement' against the Jews, is motivated not by religion but by the existence of the state. He adds that a determined attempt at Jewish conversion first emerged when Christianity became a *state* religion. On the one hand, Philippson would have argued that the liberal state differs from other forms of state in not tending towards any 'lust for conversion', but on the other hand he seems to have seen the state as such as one of the roots of anti-Semitism.

‘The Jewish question the way it occurs today is not a religious question but one of nationality [or], if you wish, one of race’ argued *Harry Bresslau* (Bresslau 1965a:53f). He derives this from Treitschke’s reference to ‘baptized and non baptized Jews’ and the demand for the Jews to ‘become Germans’ while ‘wanting to allow [the Jews] to stick to [their] religion’.<sup>466</sup>

In his reply, *Wilhelm Endner* rejected Bresslau’s claim (Endner 1965:99). Race ‘which manifests itself in physical appearance’ was only one of a number of aspects also including customs, opinions and religion. In keeping with this, he claimed that in everyday parlance ‘Jew’ referred to any person – irrespective of ‘race’ – acting in a ‘Jewish’ way.<sup>467</sup> The racial aspect is thus subordinate to a broader, cultural one.

*Ludwig Bamberger* goes further than Bresslau in attempting to explain the meaning of the category ‘race’: he argues that ‘exaggerated nationalism’ adopts the category of ‘race’ in order to justify inequality when that inequality cannot anymore be justified by religion.

As a ‘historian and patriot’, writes Bamberger, Treitschke should have studied the ‘peculiar phenomena’ that resulted from the ‘mixing of the Jewish element with modern nationality (Volkswesen)’ (Bamberger 1965:149f). ‘This surviving of an artefact from time immemorial into the present’ (ibid.:150)<sup>468</sup> should have given the ‘historian and patriot’ the opportunity to study the ‘marvellous vitality based on such a strong individuality’ as well as ‘the manifold ways in which the liberated element (das vom Banne befreite Element) has integrated itself into the various nations’. Such examination would have thrown light on ‘the characteristics of the German being (Wesen)’ and how it deals with social and political tasks. It would have shown that ‘the immortality of the unfortunate divide’ (between Jews and Gentiles) ‘is but a particular form (eine besondere Art) of that large German hereditary evil: self-destruction

<sup>466</sup> Bresslau adds in a footnote that he understands those to be ‘Jewish’ who have both parents born as Jews (ibid.:54) and refrains from using the concept ‘Semite’ as popular and imprecise parlance.

<sup>467</sup> He adds that the concept ‘Semite’ was introduced only to refer specifically to Jews ‘of Jewish race’ because the ‘Volksmund’ (vernacular; popular/folk parlance) used the term ‘Jude’ (Jew) also as a shorthand for ‘Judengenosse’ (a mate or friend of a Jew). Endner does not give any evidence for his claim about the usage of the two terms. The concepts of ‘Jew’ and ‘Semite’ actually might have been used in such a way – at least in the context of Endner’s political allegiances – or he might merely attempt to rationalize a rather loose terminology.

<sup>468</sup> ‘dies Hereinragen (literally: peeping or sticking into) eines Stueckes ältester Zeit in die Gegenwart’

(Selbstzerfleischung)...'. Bamberger suggests that the current anti-Jewish agitation is but a new instance of what he calls 'the old discord (Hader)' that makes life difficult for the German nation.<sup>469</sup> Treitschke, however, failed to do any of these.

However, Bamberger's argument also has its ambivalence. He presents 'Jewry' on the one hand as a 'surviving artefact from time immemorial ... peeping into the present', i.e. an anachronistic element that stands in opposition to 'modern nationality', on the other hand as a party in a conflict *within* the modern German nation.

Bamberger sees Treitschke motivated by three factors: tactical party-political opportunism, Treitschke's individual psychological make-up, and the inherent propensity of 'exaggerated nationalism' as a political doctrine to 'degenerate' into hatred of anything alien both within and without the boundaries of the nation:

The cult of nationality more than anything else carries within itself this temptation and it easily degenerates (artet aus) into making hate of other nations a sign of authentic conviction. From this hate of the alien beyond the border, it is only a [small] step to the hate of what can be found to be alien within one's own country (ibid.:157).

Bamberger argues that 'from time immemorial' people created social divisions with reference to 'the privileges of birth' (ibid.:158). He quotes as an example the party of the 'nativists' or 'know nothings' in the USA<sup>470</sup> who aimed to restrict the civil rights of newly arriving immigrants.

Unlike the American immigrants, however, the German Jews have settled in Germany since she 'entered history'. Therefore, they cannot be attacked as immigrants. Neither, however, would it make sense to demand

that today's large national states should be purified according to the principle of absolute racial purity. As a matter of fact, all civilized nations have been created from diverse tribes and have found and expressed their power precisely in such assimilation (ibid.:159).<sup>471</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> This seems to refer both to the religious wars and the national fragmentation before 1871.

<sup>470</sup> Bamberger writes 'Nordamerika'.

<sup>471</sup> A critique of Treitschke's conception of nationhood is also central to *Joël's* argument who argues similarly to Bamberger: 'All the talk about the difficulties of amalgamation is professorial doctrinairism anyway. We Jews living here are Orientals to the same degree that today's Germans are Asians. We are supposed to be aliens because our fathers allegedly lived in Palestine eighteen hundred years ago. *Allegedly* because it is well known that there were large Jewish



The concept of the 'Semitic race' has been taken from the 'garbage of physiology and linguistics'. 'The racial distinction' has been adopted in spite of its meaninglessness:

It was adopted only when inequality of right could no longer be justified with reference to religious denomination. But the weak surrogate cannot replace this concrete and honest means of distinction. Being baptized or not, that makes sense and has power; Semitic or Germanic cannot be used without hitting the baptized with the un-baptized (ibid.:159f).

The category of race serves to perpetuate inequality after the latter's initial justification has stopped working. Bamberger points out that the *Berlin Congress*<sup>472</sup> proclaimed the equality of confessions as a fundamental principle of modern constitutional law (ibid.:160), a principle that Treitschke would not want to challenge. Bamberger suggests, however, that the discontinuation of formal religious discrimination has not led to equality but merely to a change in the way inequality is legitimized:

(T)he impossibility of a denial of rights on the basis of religion pushes the struggle in Germany (bei uns) time and again onto the physiological terrain of the inequality of races (...).

If the racial principle were to be taken seriously and put into practice, then Jews – baptized or not – would have to be expelled together with second- or third-generation descendants of Jews as well as children of mixed marriage. For Bamberger it goes without saying that such a monstrous endeavour would be a practical impossibility: his pointing to the enormous implications of invoking the category of 'race' at all is for Bamberger a *reductio ad absurdum* of the racial category itself.<sup>473</sup> Bamberger brushes 'race' from the table and concludes:

Why should one torture oneself with all these threadbare pretexts! Let us admit honestly: we are dealing with an ancient antipathy that has been

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communities in Europe before the emergence of Christianity. Actually these made possible the dissemination of Christianity in the first place. (...) Is Herr von Treitschke able to tell where his fathers were eighteen hundred years ago? (...) Does a modern nationality exclusively consist of individuals of the same descent? (...) Are the English not a great nation because they are a mixed people, are they not perhaps a great nation for that very reason?' (Joël 1965:20)

<sup>472</sup> Treitschke had written about this congress in his original contribution at length and very positively (Treitschke 1896a:5).

<sup>473</sup> It was then not conceivable that anybody might possibly find these practical implications quite reasonable (as was the case only a few decades later).

handed down from generation to generation for centuries and has become a fact of nature so much that in many people even the strongest logic cannot challenge the power of habit (ibid.:161).

This antipathy 'originated essentially from the conflicts of religious confessions'. Once people have learned that 'there are many homes in the house of God', religious antipathy is 'destined to disappear', and so 'the racial divide' will finally be overcome by 'humanity and education';

until then one has to take into account the undeniable fact of a sentiment which is unable to take account of itself (eines ueber sich selbst unklaren Gefühls).

Bamberger's position is based on the conceptual distinction between 'modern nationality' and 'the cult of nationality', the latter of which easily 'degenerates' into racism. Modern, well-measured nationalism and the exaggerated 'cult of nationality' appear as completely distinct entities as the latter's inherent racism is merely a 'threadbare pretext' for religious discrimination in a time when religion has ceased to appear as a legitimate discourse in itself: a case of misleading packaging of an anachronistic and outdated product.

Bamberger does not only fail to acknowledge the modernity of the discourse of race, but also to hint at any reason why religious discrimination has (supposedly) become anachronistic. Religious belief and its specific forms seem to constitute an independent reality whose development does not need to be explained historically. In Bamberger's account, they seem to change and disappear spontaneously: people somehow 'learned' to tolerate each other's beliefs, and the contradiction 'is destined' to disappear. The slow but finally victorious march of 'humanity and education' remains unexplained. Despite his suggestive formulations, his general conception does not allow Bamberger to address the crucial questions why 'religious antipathy' had to take on the disguise of 'racial divide', and why we should expect the discourse of race to disappear.

#### 2.2.5.4 LAZARUS: THE NATION AS A PRODUCT OF THE NATIONAL SPIRIT

It is of obvious significance that the title of one of the first public responses to Treitschke's first article<sup>474</sup> was, '*What does national mean?*'. It was given with the intention of promoting self-clarification amongst the Jewish community and was widely circulated in its printed version. Lazarus argues that the German Jews *are Germans* and engages for this purpose in a detailed discussion of the concept of the nation.<sup>475</sup>

Lazarus compiles a comprehensive list of categories that he argues are *not* in themselves elements of a sufficient definition of the nation:

- *Forms of settlement, morals and customs* (Wohnung, Sitten und Gebräuche) are not crucial parameters that define a nation because they are not generic within any single nation, and the same forms of settlement, morals and customs can be found in the contexts of different and unrelated nations.
- *Territorial separation and community* are 'the basis of political unity' but members of different nationalities can share the same territory while members of the same nationality can be found living on different territories. One territorial unit could contain several state structures and one nation-state could consist of different non-continuous territories. Most importantly, though, territorial borders change and 'depend on subjective opinion (Ansicht)'. Lazarus argues that 'the separation of nations (die Scheidung der Völker) is for themselves not in doubt (ist ihnen selbst zweifellos), but the borders of the country are object of endless struggles'. Lazarus claims that while the state (in its territorial and political borders) is contingent, national-ethnic (Volks-) boundaries are fixed and self-evident.

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<sup>474</sup> Possibly, as Lazarus himself later claimed (Lazarus 1887), the very first one.

<sup>475</sup> Lazarus draws on contributions published in the '*Zeitschrift für Voelkerpsychologie and Sprachwissenschaft*' which he co-founded in 1859, an involvement that is the basis of his academic acclaim and because of which his contribution to the 'Antisemitismusstreit' carried particular authority. When the discipline of 'Voelkerpsychologie' was newly created it had to define its objects of research, namely 'Voelker' (Lazarus 1880:7). Lazarus draws on an article published in the fourth volume of the '*Zeitschrift für Voelkerpsychologie and Sprachwissenschaft*' by R. Boekh who argues language is the most significant category defining a nation. In the subsequent section of his lecture, Lazarus elaborates on Boekh's approach using a programmatic essay by himself and the co-editor, Steinthal, published in the first issue of the '*Zeitschrift*' from 1859.

- *Citizenship* (Staatsangehörigkeit) does not define a nation because only ‘in earliest times (in den ältesten Zeiten)’ did the borders of states coincide with the boundaries of nations (ibid.:8f).
- The same is true about *religion* (ibid.:9).
- *Descent* (Abstammung) is ‘not at all the true mark’ of nationality since no nationality in Europe is ‘of pure descent’. Nations emerge either through mixing of lines of descent or through their splitting up.<sup>476</sup>

While all of the above are elements of nation-formation, Lazarus singles out language as the most important ‘objective element of the formation of national unity’ (ibid.:12). Language ‘connects all members of a nation to a spiritual (geistige) community’ (ibid.:10). The importance of language is underlined by the fact that language was created ‘in the first human community through the need for mutual understanding and continued [in turn] to create the conditions for this understanding’. The child ‘develops the ability of thinking in the language of the family first’. Communication and exchange lead to the development of ‘manifold forms of the inner unity of the person (mannigfachen Ausbildung des innerlich Einen)’.

However, Lazarus does not stop at a definition of the nation as a community of language. The main thrust of his argument is based on his refusal to acknowledge that what he calls ‘objective’ categories are in the last instance at all definitive. The question ‘what is a nation (Volk)’ ought not to be answered with

a classification of the human species in the style of natural history (in naturgeschichtlicher Weise gemachte Eintheilung der Menschenart) according to its varieties (Varietäten)<sup>477</sup> and its less and less numerous differences and forms (Formungen) (...) (ibid.:11).

Such an approach might be appropriate for the classification of plants by a botanist who has to ask what degree of similarity is necessary to group two plants

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<sup>476</sup> In April 1880, the ‘*Deutsche Wacht*’ published a detailed critique of Lazarus’s text, ‘What does national mean?’ which is signed ‘N.’ (probably Naudh/Nordmann; *Deutsche Wacht* 1880:386). The text argues against Lazarus that every school boy knew ‘that “national” is derived from “nascor” and refers to the innate (Angeborenes)’. He claims that Lazarus wants to ‘sidestep’ this obvious fact and gives the sarcastic advice that Lazarus should better ask ‘What does people (Volk) mean’ because ‘with the concept *Volk* it is possible to operate more by sleight of hand (mehr Taschenspieler-Tricks zu spielen) than with the simple concept national’.

into the same family. The concept of the nation, however, cannot be conceived in such a way because it 'is not based on the physical, zoological aspect, but on a spiritual (geistigen) one'. Lazarus accepts that language is the most important 'objective element of the formation of national unity'. The objective elements in themselves, however, do not make a nation.

Lazarus differentiates 'content' and 'form' of consciousness (ibid.:12). 'Content' is constituted by sentiments, notions, concepts and the feelings attached to them, 'form' by 'the moving of these contents through [the faculty of] consciousness or [in other words] the combination of their elements'. All elements of 'national consciousness (Volksbewusstsein)' – religion, customs (Sitte), constitution – are 'thought content (Gedankeninhalt)'. Form as well as content of language are subject to 'national specificity (Volkseigenthuemlichkeit)'; form, though, is affected by national specificity 'in a finer, more tender and more intense way' than content is. Words are the unity of idea (Vorstellungsinhalt) and 'thought form (Gedankenform)', while 'movement of thought (Gedankenbewegung)' is represented in inflection (Wortbeugung) as well as syntax (Satzbildungsmitteln).

Language not only contains the world-view (Weltanschauung) of a people, but also represents the perceptive activity itself (ist auch das Abbild der anschauenden Thätigkeit selbst) (ibid.).

At this point of his argument, Lazarus employs a conceptual mind/body dualism that separates 'material' or 'objective' from 'spiritual' or 'subjective' aspects, the latter of which transform and transcend the former:

The true nature and the essence (eigentliche Wesen) of nationality can only be understood as residing in the spirit (aus dem Geiste). (...) Spirit, freedom and history intervene in the natural distribution of the human species according to races, tribal groups, tribes, clans, families. They separate what by nature would belong together and mix and assimilate what by nature would be different. Spiritual community and difference are therefore independent from genealogical community and difference. The concept of the nation (Volk) is grounded on spiritual, historical constellations (Verhältnisse) intervening into naturally given differences; and what makes a nation a nation are not objective conditions such as descent or language

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<sup>477</sup> 'Variety' was then a synonym of 'race'.

as such but the subjective ideas of the members of the nation who are joined in considering themselves a nation (ibid.:12f).

Lazarus concludes that the researcher can determine human beings' belonging to *race* and *tribe* with the same objectivity with which a natural historian classifies plants. Talking about the *nation*, however, is different: 'we *ask* human beings which nation they belong to' (ibid.13; italics added). Although the nation is not independent from material conditions, it 'does not have anything that could be called – except by analogy - a body (Leib)'. It is a 'spiritual creation of the individuals who constitute it; they *are* not a people, they constantly *create* it' (ibid.; italics added).

The nation is the first product of the national spirit. The individuals do not create it as individuals but only by overcoming (*aufheben*) their isolation. The awareness of this self-transcendence (*Selbstaufhebung*) and of the [individuals'] dissolution into a general national spirit (*Volksgeist*) expresses itself in the notion of the people. The national spirit creates the notion and with it also the actuality of the nation (*und damit auch die Sache Volk*) (ibid.).

Lazarus rejects a 'scientific' – in other words: a positivistic – approach and advocates what could be called a 'hermeneutical' or 'interpretive' approach:

We do not have to develop out of an examination of objective givens our own definition of the nation as a discrete, objective concept as if corresponding to a concrete object, but we have to interpret (*erläutern*) the existing subjective definitions that the nations implicitly give of themselves (ibid.).

Every individual nation has an individual conception of itself which 'will always base itself on objective conditions such as descent, language, public life (*Staatsleben*) and so on', and which in turn is an aspect of its particular actuality as a nation (ibid.:14). However:

the crucial issue, namely the light in which the self-consciousness illuminates itself, is the subjective, free act of self-awareness (*Selbsterfassung*) as a whole and as a people.

Lazarus concludes that 'the subjective community (Zusammenhang) in the spirit (Geiste) of a nation' is 'based on, developed and experienced' through the nation's 'history in the widest sense' – or else, 'common destiny':

Insofar as an individual – or an individual with his family – over generations participates in history passively and actively, the subjective bond of belonging (Band der Zugehörigkeit) grows. Illness and famine when they hit a country do not ask after religion, descent or language but as common destiny (Geschick) they unite the minds (Gemuether). The blessings of peace and the burdens, sorrows and sacrifices of war are shared by all, and all share as well the virtues that war has demanded and strengthened (gestählt). Fighting shoulder to shoulder, the men (Männer) grow hearts fit for the unity of the historical deed. Even separate and hostile tribes proceed towards national unity. Will – that most personal, most character-forming element of the human mind (Gemueth) – alone the will of the tribes decides [the outcome of history]. In the German *Reich*, the will alone, proven in deed, has made those, who less than a decade ago had fought each other as mortal enemies, a unity. Not the least, as we Germans know best, the common history of intellectual life joins the individuals and tribes to the unity of the nation (ibid.:14f; italics added).

Shared subjects and levels of education (Bildung), mutual support in exploring the same things and exchange in exploring different things, 'in short: the flow of spirit and intellect [Geist] forming the inner life creates in everybody – according to the extent of their participation – the consciousness of their national-spiritual unity' (ibid.:15).

Similarly, while it is an objective anthropological fact that 'nature' has 'planted into our hearts the inclination to join a defined group of fellow creatures',<sup>478</sup> it has left open for the individual humans to decide *what kind of group* to join or to build: 'The motives for acting so (die Gruppierungsmotive) have been left open to us and we see them change through all ages' (ibid.:16).

The 'natural underpinnings (Unterlagen) of human sociability (Geselligkeit)' – spatial community, language, exchange of means of subsistence, geographical and hereditary influences – constitute an 'intertwining of interests and customs to which higher relationships can easily attach themselves'. They do not, however, constitute 'the bonding of minds (kein Band der Gemuether)' which is the basis of the nation:

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<sup>478</sup> '... uns in eine geschlossene Gruppe unserer Mitgeschoepfe hineinzustellen'; Lazarus quotes from a text by Gustav Ruemelin.

Not every birthplace is a home (Heimat), not every land of the fathers is a fatherland. Through the community of state and law I can be chained to people whose language I do not understand, whose customs (Sitte), culture (Bildung) and belief are alien to me. Human freedom again stands above all these individual powers of attraction (einzelnen Anziehungskräften). I can break away from it all, join strangers (Fremden) and talk to King David's ancestress (Ahnfrau): Your people be my people and your God be my God.<sup>479</sup> The concept of the nation is not objectively defined but also depends on subjective sentiment (Empfindung). My nation are those whom I consider to be my nation, whom I call my people, to whom I know myself joined by unbreakable bonds (unlösbare Bande) (ibid.:16f).

Lazarus makes a distinction between a more emphatic concept of the 'nation' (Volk) and a more casual one. He presents the emphatic concept in a formulation by Ruemelin:<sup>480</sup>

Our mind (Gemüth) (...) will always feel a silent longing (Sehnsucht) for a full, unitary community of life (nach einer vollen einheitlichen Lebensgemeinschaft). It will aim at the ideal of a central group that encompasses all matters of life (die zentrale, alle Lebensziele umschliessende Gruppe), the pivot and focus of all particular motives for getting together (in dem alle einzelnen Gruppierungsmotive ihren Halt- und Sammelpunkt finden), in which we have a complete sense that these are our people (die Unsrigen), the kin (Angehörigen) by whom we stand, with whom we endure, whose fate (Geschick) we share, from whom to part would be an intolerable thought.

Our German word 'Volk' in its deeper meaning refers to this ideal aim of the universal group (Universal-Gruppe) of the full community of life, without though excluding those less perfect forms that are constituted by the individual main characteristics (ibid.:17).

On the other hand, 'we have to accept' that there is also a more casual use of the term: this usage refers to every group that wants to distinguish itself from its neighbours with reference to descent or language, or, on the other hand, 'every multitude (Menge) that is governed by a state' as a people or a nation.

Paradoxical statements such as that 'the Belgian people consists of two peoples' follow from confusing the two ways of using the term *people* (ibid.:17f).

Lazarus goes on to integrate 'objective' and 'subjective' elements into a comprehensive definition of the ideal concept of the nation (ibid.:18):

<sup>479</sup> This is an allusion to the *Book of Ruth*.

<sup>480</sup> Gustav Ruemelin was a 'longtime liberal' who embraced Malthusian population control policy and celebrated rural life (Sheehan 1978:197). He was the chancellor of the university of Tuebingen.



A country large and fertile enough to feed a dense, numerous population, fit to defend itself against all its neighbors, varied enough to warrant a multiple development of economic and intellectual life; on this soil, a linguistically unified population that works it and has struggled for it and knows itself united in common deeds and sufferings; this multitude protected and ordered through a unified state sprung from its womb (Schoss) intertwined with its interests and memories; based on secure statehood, the flowering and cultivation of all those ideal goods of humanity and of intellectual, moral (sittlichen) and religious life [growing] in free and manifold forms, including contradictions and struggles that strengthen a sense of community spreading in sovereignty and reconciliation – this is what it means to be a nation.<sup>481</sup>

For Lazarus, the prevalence of nation over race is part of the prevalence of spirit over matter, and the victory of a 'subjective' concept of the nation over an 'objective' one is part of the struggle of 'idealism' over 'materialism'. He opposes his idealist concept of the nation, that has the 'national spirit' transcend its material conditions and actually *make* the nation, to racial conceptions of the nation:

This blood- and race-theory is in its entirety a product of a general coarsely sensualist-materialist world-view (grobsinnlichen Materialismus der Welt- und Lebensanschauung ueberhaupt). Those who – on the one hand – argue for a revival of ideality (Idealität) are critically wrong if they do not – on the other hand – recognize that materialism has to be fought lock, stock and barrel (auf der ganzen Linie) and replaced by a higher and purer world view (Lebensansicht) (ibid.:21f).

Lazarus writes that the idea of culture being determined by blood is inconsistent with subscribing to 'the victorious power of the idea' (ibid.:22). He sees 'the arousal of racial or tribal hatred' as a necessary accompaniment of materialism.

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<sup>481</sup> Lazarus' text – be it a unique intervention or just mirroring a general trend of thinking – shows how much the contemporary discussion of the nation in the social sciences is rooted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It would be worthwhile exploring how this strikingly contemporary sounding definition was received throughout the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whether it was preceded by or paralleled by similar formulations, and especially whether Ernest Renan's lecture from 1882 and Otto Bauer's *Nationalitätenfrage* (1907), which seem to echo it, were directly influenced by it. Alfred Leicht writes in his book on Lazarus (Leicht 1904:19f) that Renan's lecture (1882) was consciously based on Lazarus' lecture, a copy of which Lazarus had sent to Renan. Renan also sent a copy of his lecture to Lazarus. Although Renan failed to mention Lazarus, the close affinity between both texts was observed by contemporaries who urged Lazarus to complain (which he didn't bother doing).

Racial hatred is 'the lowest [form of] antagonism (Widerwillen)',<sup>482</sup> Although the actuality of race and tribe (Stamm) are not denied, they are but aspects of *matter* and have no role to play in the realm of *spirit* and *sociability*. Bringing race and tribe as points of reference into the realm of spirit and society means undermining the human effort to spiritualize existence.

Although for Lazarus commonality of religion is one of the 'objective elements' that constitute the material substratum of a particular nation, he rejects the idea that any one religion as such could have a national character: there is no such thing as a 'German religion'. Therefore he rejects Treitschke's claim that Judaism 'was not German' (ibid.): Judaism is just as much (or as little) German as Christianity is (ibid.:25):

Today, every nationality comprises several religions, every religion several nationalities. (...) Individual-civil, political and national activity (die individuell buergerliche, die politische und nationale Tätigkeit) of any human being, including the Jew, is independent from religion (ibid.:26).<sup>483</sup>

Lazarus adds that Judaism in particular was a religion that 'neither grants anything to any power nor demands anything from any power (Macht) or dominion (Herrschaft)', and concludes from this that it 'can never come into conflict with the state'. Lazarus supports this claim with a discussion of a text that he argues is crucial to Jewish religious and state theory, the book 'Mar Samuel'<sup>484</sup> according to which 'the law of the country's government, or of the empires, is the law for the Jew'. Lazarus argues that this formulation is based on

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<sup>482</sup> Lazarus suggests that it is the form common amongst animals: he suggests that animals hate each other 'for no reason but their difference'. However, 'living in a peace-breathing human habitat (friedensathmenden Menschenwohnung), dog and cat learn how to get along'. 'A human being (Mensch), however, in whom the feeling of humanity has not yet arisen or is already stifled, sees an enemy in every human being who is different.' Lazarus's argument is based on a dualism of a bestial-material natural substratum on which - and in opposition to which - humans develop spirit and sociability. The power of spirit over matter is so strong that it even extends to animals when they are being domesticated by human beings.

<sup>483</sup> Lazarus anticipates and rejects the possible counter-argument that only the Jews constitute a community of belief *and* tribe (sind Glaubens- und Stammesgenossen) *at the same time*. Against this he argues that also the Germans, the English, the Dutch and the Danes share 'tribal' background as well as Protestant religion (sind germanische Stammes- und protestantische Glaubensgenossen). Furthermore, for the actual life of a French Jew it does not make a difference whether or not there are Jews in Abyssinia, and neither do (Christian) Germans become less German because Christianity might be spreading amongst the Iroquois. The relation of a group of people to the particular state they inhabit is not necessarily affected by the existence of another group of people of the same tribe or religion (or both) in another state.

<sup>484</sup> Mar Samuel (180-253) was a Babylonian writer (Belke 1977:LXX). Belke comments that Lazarus overstretches the meaning of the sentence in a *quasi*-Protestant direction.

a notion that has been pivotal to Judaism from its very beginnings: the belief that God commands the fate of the world, and so every legitimate government is *ipso facto* legitimised by God. Lazarus claims that his own understanding of nationality is in keeping with a line of traditional Jewish thought that ‘has never been challenged’: since German Jews have become German citizens, they share the fate of the German nation, are therefore Germans and accept the German state as legitimate.

Lazarus adds that the Germans have only recently become ‘a nation in the genuine, true sense of the word’ (ibid.:27), a process in which the Jews have fully taken part. In a footnote, Lazarus underscores the participation of Jews in the German-French war of 1870-71. He concludes:

Whatever we do we do as Germans. When we earn fortunes on the world market – something people like to point out so much – then we increase the wealth of the [German] nation (ibid.:27).

Lazarus concludes that ‘the heightening of the national feeling (Nationalgefühl) is a serious issue ... for the German as well as for any other people’ (ibid.:27). One cannot contribute to this aim by arousing antagonism (Widerwillen) in one part of the population against another one, in particular not by ‘alarming the imagination with a strong fear of facts that are – not facts at all’.

Central to Lazarus’ conception is the categorical distinction between ‘material’ – as it were: corporeal – aspects of the nation, as the worldly ‘intertwining of interests’, and ‘spiritual’ aspects. Language is the mediator between both, standing with one leg in the material world (warranted by its practical, functional aspects) and with one leg in the realm of self-consciousness, freedom, human will and the making of history. While the material world constitutes races, tribes, clans, etc, only the spiritual world – the ‘bonding of minds’ – constitutes *nations*.<sup>485</sup>

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<sup>485</sup> In a review of new pamphlets on the ‘Jewish Question’, Philippson (taking up the formulation in the title of a pamphlet he is reviewing) suggests replacing the discussion of ‘what does national mean’ with the more pragmatic one, ‘what does alien (fremd) mean’ (AZ 5.10.1880, No. 40). He argues that anyone who is born in a country to parents ‘who belong to this country (die diesem Lande angehören)’ and who has been raised and educated there and in its language ‘is not alien’. This ‘high and holy right’ is unaffected by anyone’s definitions and discussions of the concept of ‘nationality’.



#### 2.2.5.5 TREITSCHKE'S RESPONSE: ... BUT THE NATIONAL SPIRIT IS NOT IRRELIGIOUS

'Unfortunately', responds Treitschke to Lazarus, he has to disagree. He concedes that

the essence of nationality is to be found not merely in descent (Abstammung) or language, but in the unquestioned and lively consciousness of unity (Treitschke 1896c:57).

But he reproaches Lazarus for not dealing with the problem how such 'consciousness of unity' would be possible amongst people who hold differing religious sentiments:

That living consciousness of unity that constitutes nationality can not usually be formed amongst people who think in fundamentally different ways about the highest and most sacred questions of emotional life.

While different *denominations* are a lesser problem, different *religions* can coexist in one nationality 'only as a transitional state' and only as long as one religion 'clearly forms the rule' while believers of other religions are 'a minute minority'. Treitschke also rejects Lazarus's claim that 'today, every nationality includes several religions':

I am not a follower of the doctrine of the Christian state, because the state is a secular order and has to exert its power with impartial justice also against non-Christians. But without doubt we Germans are a Christian nation (Volk) (ibid.:57f).

Treitschke argues that Christianity is intertwined (*verwachsen*) 'with every fibre of the German people', while Judaism is 'the national religion of a tribe that initially was alien to us' (ibid.:58). Art, science, 'even disbelief', and 'all healthy institutions of state and society' of the German people have been 'fertilized' by Christianity, whereas 'the Germans never had any part' in the development of Judaism, and *vice versa*. Judaism remained restricted to the 'Jewish tribe' because it was 'more suitable for defence than for proselytizing'. Treitschke rejects Lazarus's disconnecting religion and nationality also with reference to other nations: 'The most cultured (*bestgesitteten*) nations of the present, the Western European nations, are all Christian nations (*Völker*)'. Treitschke concludes:

Just imagine that one half of our nation would renounce Christianity: no doubt, the German nation would have to fall apart. Everything we call German would fall to pieces.

Treitschke reproaches Lazarus for not distinguishing between 'religion' (Religion) and 'denomination' (Konfession) and argues that while different denominations can co-exist within one nation, different religions cannot.

Crucial to this step in Treitschke's argument is the ambivalent use of the concepts *Staat*, *Nation* and *Volk* and their relation to each other. He argues first that the state should be beyond religion as a 'secular order', although this is followed by the assertion that in the case of Germany 'all institutions of the state' are essentially Christian in their spirit. Also, all Western nations are 'Christian nations'. *Nation* and *Volk* seem to be used as synonyms in this context. The argument that all German state institutions are Christian seems to presuppose that national culture informs<sup>486</sup> (and – to some extent – precedes) state institutions. It follows from this that the initial (normative) statement – the state *should be* secular – is contradicted by the subsequent (positive) statement that the state *is* always informed by religion as one crucial constituent of nationality. The normative claim for the nation-state's secular character necessarily stands in contradiction with its actual constitution that involves a particular religion.

This contradiction affects the guarantee given by Treitschke that the (secular but Christian) state 'has to exert its power with impartial justice also against non-Christians':

Just because a tiny minority of Jews lives amongst them, the Christian peoples of the West have not become mixed Christian-Jewish peoples. They might grant that minority all civil rights and complete freedom of religion; but despite having granted emancipation to the Jews they remain entitled and obliged to remain in the upright stance of their Christian culture (in dem angehobenen Gange<sup>487</sup> ihrer christlichen Gesittung) and to preserve the Christian character of their institutions (ibid.:59f).

It is the tiny number of the Jews that makes their claim to cultural equality beyond legal emancipation appear so 'monstrous': it is Lazarus's 'principal

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<sup>486</sup> Informs, not necessarily determines

<sup>487</sup> I am not clear about the exact meaning of 'angehobenen Gange'. Obviously it expresses some kind of superiority; 'Gang' could either be 'pace', 'movement' or 'stance'. The imagery could either be that Christians – further ahead in evolution – walk upright while Jews tend to stoop, or that Christians walk 'in a faster pace' than Jews.

mistake' that he ignores 'the modest status of exception that befits the Jews in the Christian cultural world' (ibid.:60).

Treitschke writes that not the state but the *Volk* is Christian. The question is then: how could the *Volk* be Christian *and* the state be not Christian, but at the same time the state be a national state, i.e. based on the *Volk*? In other words: is the *secular nation-state* – a central project of liberalism – not a contradiction in terms? This is a question that Naudh will ask.

#### 2.2.5.6 COHEN: AMBIVALENCE ABOUT NATIONALITY IS IMMORAL

*Hermann Cohen* attacks four aspects of Lazarus' position, which effectively amounts to a comprehensive rejection:<sup>488</sup>

- the suggestion that the link between nationalism and religion is rather loose;
- the suggestion that race is of little relevance to the nation;
- the suggestion that nationalism should be linked with and, as it were, balanced out by universalist ideals;
- the suggestion that diversity is a value.

Cohen asserts that 'a nation that wants to found and to reinforce its existence as a state needs to take care of its religious foundation' (Cohen 1965:130). All (potential) members of the nation have to participate in its religious foundation, 'confessional differences related to history and tradition' (ibid.:130f) notwithstanding.<sup>489</sup> However, Cohen rejects the idea 'that religious form was a matter of no political relevance and should not be the concern of the state' as 'a flawed liberal slogan (Schablone), which unfortunately has been taken on board by many Jews' (ibid.).

Against Lazarus, Cohen holds that 'the German people, and that includes us Jews, breathe out of the culture of Christianity'. Cohen agrees with Treitschke's claim that 'the co-existence of several different religions can only be a transitory

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<sup>488</sup> Cohen regrets 'to admit' (Cohen 1965:133) that his statement has been caused and motivated by Lazarus's claim that 'there is no German religion' and that Judaism is just as German as Christianity is.

<sup>489</sup> Cohen seems to be following here Kant's argument that it is essential for the state that there is *religion*, but the subtleties of differing *confessions* (Glaubensarten) should not be the state's concern (cp. 'Der Streit der Fakultäten', Abschnitt 1,II: 'Allgemeine Anmerkungen: Von Religionssekten', Kant 1975:30-33, 44-67).

state' and can only last 'if one religion is the rule and the followers of the other religions are the exception and by far a minority' (ibid.:134). However, this is not an argument that can reasonably be used in support of anti-Semitism:

Christianity, which is in the 'world-historical' process of 'struggling for that purer form' of religion, can easily accommodate a minority that holds 'a belief so pure and free of all paganism' as the Jews.

The concept of the 'coexistence of several different religions' does not sit comfortably with Cohen's Kantian definition of the term, that recognizes only one (universal) religion, if many different 'Glaubensarten'. In this context, a multiplicity of 'Glaubensarten' is held never to be a problem for the state as long as all of them can be interpreted in the sense of the generic concept of *Religion*.

In the present passage, however, Cohen's stressing the 'purity' of Judaism implies that a less 'pure' religion (more precisely: 'Glaubensart') would constitute a problem. Furthermore, the formulation by Treitschke that Cohen approves of clearly implies that the 'minority' believers do not enjoy equal cultural currency, while Cohen argues for the equality in value of Judaism and Protestant Christianity in the 'struggle for that purer form of religion'. Admission to the national community appears here as a reward for 'purity' from heathendom, in other words: compatibility with Protestantism.

Cohen underpins his discussion of the concept of 'race' with a methodological critique: he accuses Lazarus of both empiricism and one-sided idealism. Cohen is not interested in asking (as Lazarus does) whether race is *empirically* a constitutive element of nations as they actually exist: he acknowledges that Lazarus' discussion is valid in the context of an empirical account of the actuality of existing nations. However, Cohen subscribes to a *normative* concept of nationality that differs from that formulated by Lazarus: 'without hesitation' Cohen affirms that racial unity of a nation (Volk) is desirable and 'to a certain minimal extent necessary' (ibid.:134). Similarly,

... the ideal politician (...) will say: I aim towards a more intimate (innigere) and higher unity for my nation (Volk) than what the statistician is able to abstract from the given empirical material. I aim towards a representation of my people that respects its physical characteristics and develops its racial type most magnificently. This wish and this ideal measure for the evaluation of national processes and misfortunes are natural and legitimate (ibid.:135).



Cohen refuses to limit the theoretical argument merely to approximate to a given reality but argues that it should project a potential state of things that could become real under ideal conditions. This ideality consists for Cohen in a state that would allow the inherent racial characteristics of any nation fully to develop. A racial ideal should serve as the natural and legitimate touchstone for national politics. Cohen adds that 'Treitschke did not say: the Jews are Semites and are therefore not allowed to retain German citizenship, but he said the opposite', namely he urged them to become more German rather than less.

Cohen rejects Lazarus' rejection of racialism as 'vulgar materialism (grobsinnliche Materialismus)' and argues that the concept of race is compatible with an overall idealist conception:

Whoever appreciates and loves the bodily substance of a national soul (die leibliche Substanz einer Volksseele) in and for its particularity, is not therefore a materialist.

With this remark, Cohen implies that Lazarus' conception is one-sidedly idealist, while for Cohen (arguing dialectically) a soul appears to be necessarily linked to a material substratum. The bodily equivalent of the 'national soul' is the 'racial substance'. Cohen adds that '... whoever loves his nation with natural spontaneous love, does not have to fear shrivelling (verschrumpfen) into a narrow-hearted cosmopolitan (engherzigen Weltbuerger)'.

Cohen also takes issue with Lazarus' formulation that

... we aim at a Germany that is free of any felony (Felonie) against received (angestammte) traditions as well as against universal human principles (allgemeine menschheitliche Prinzipien) (ibid.:136; cp.: Lazarus 1880:36f).

Cohen rejects both sides of this statement. Developing and extending traditions is more important than keeping 'received' ones; more crucially, however, he also rejects the obligation to respect 'universal human principles':

It is not necessary to recommend this advice too dearly to the hearts of us Jews; if this was only possible to say without ridiculous embarrassment and clumsy indiscreet intrusiveness (Zudringlichkeit), I should suggest that

spontaneous cultivation of pure Germanity (naturwuechsige Pflege des puren Deutschthums) would be to the benefit of all of us.

‘As we are human beings’, we ‘feel and think differently from what Lazarus suggests’. Cohen asserts that ‘we have to love our nation (Vaterland)’ not because it is ‘worth loving’<sup>490</sup> but ‘*because it is our nation*’ (ibid.:137; italics in the original). He asks sarcastically ‘what would the English or French Jews say’ if the German Jews loved Germany (in Lazarus’ words) ‘because we think that it struggles most fervently for the fulfilment of a universally human ideal’? Cohen rejects all universalistic and liberal rationalizations of patriotic love – such as those advocated by Lazarus – and asserts straightforwardly:

We all love our nation (Vaterland) because it is our maternal soil (Mutterboden), because we love our home (Heimath), because we consider Palestine worth at most a journey; because in the homeland (Vaterland) our German mother-tongue is spoken: first word I babbled, sweet first mother-word!<sup>491</sup> Because we are just humans, and every human being wants to have a homeland (Vaterland) (ibid.:137).

Instead of Lazarus’ search for good, rational and universalistic reasons to love one’s nation, Cohen puts forward the notion that patriotic attachment is in itself reason enough being an anthropological universal.<sup>492</sup> In an almost ironic sense there is a rationalist edge in Cohen’s rejection of rationalizing one’s patriotism. Cohen looks for a *universal* concept of patriotic love. Should all members of all nations in the world try to find equally good and convincing reasons for loving their respective nations, trouble was looming. The members of a nation for example that can reasonably claim ‘that it struggles most fervently for the fulfilment of a universally human ideal’ (as Lazarus suggests is the case with the Germans) might easily feel superior to the members of a nation that can only

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<sup>490</sup> Cohen quotes Lazarus (1880:37): ‘Burke once said in the English parliament: if we are supposed to love our nation (Vaterland) then it must be worth loving (liebenswuerdig)’. Lazarus uses this formulation in the context of his argument that the German nation is more committed to humanist ideals than any other nation, i.e. it is – as long as it maintains this commitment – particularly ‘worth loving’.

<sup>491</sup> ‘Erster Laut den ich gelallet, suesses, erstes Mutterwort!’ Cohen paraphrases the folk-song ‘Muttersprache’ (mother tongue) by Max von Schenkendorf (1783-1817, born in the Eastern Prussian town of Tilsit). The first verse of the song goes: ‘Muttersprache, Mutterlaut,/ wie so wonnesam, so traut!/ Erstes Wort, das mir erschallet,/ süßes, erstes Liebeswort,/ erster Ton, den ich gelallet,/ klingest ewig in mir fort.’

claim that it is good at cooking or pearl-diving. Except within a strictly relativistic framework (which neither Cohen nor Lazarus embrace), this would inevitably result in a hierarchy of good or not so good reasons to love one's country. Some nations must obviously be more worth loving than others. Here is an inevitable source of conflict. Cohen's argument implies that being proud of striving for *particularly* universalist ideals actually brings in particularism through the back door. Patriotism without specific reasons is in this sense less dangerous than an 'enlightened' patriotism that has learned how to enrol humanity in its services. This element of Cohen's rejection of Lazarus's idealism is almost a 'critique of ideology'.

Cohen demands that German Jewry's 'evil, slippery ambivalence' about patriotism 'has to be rooted out (beseitigt) completely' (ibid.:137). Together with the religious Jewish question (the converging of Protestant Christianity and Judaism to the 'purer form of religion'), the racial question ('insofar as it is a question at all that poses itself to human consideration') will solve itself automatically (ibid.:138). Cohen admonishes the Jews not to be deceived by the 'malicious or obscure' character of the anti-Semitic attack into a general rejection of the category of 'race':

We have to acknowledge that the racial instinct (Racen-Instinct) is not at all straightforward barbarism, but it is a natural, nationally legitimate desire. It only becomes barbarism when it degenerates into the political or national exclusion of those fellow citizens who do not have, nor want to have, another nation (Vaterland). In itself, it is a spontaneous (unwillkuerliches) and healthy (gutes) psychological motive, and indeed it can be developed into a useful corrective and regulative that is worth considering; never, though, must it be given validity as a moral (sittliche) norm (ibid.:138).

The 'racial instinct' is for Cohen an aspect of the general human longing to belong to a nation. The thrust of his argument is that the German Jews should channel this longing unequivocally into the desire to become Germans – by any means. He claims that 'all of us wish we simply had the German, the Germanic appearance' (das Deutsche, das Germanische Aussehen). Therefore it is just a matter of time until physical assimilation will have happened. The important

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<sup>492</sup> The chain of five reasons – all introduced by 'because' – is largely tautological and of a rhetorical character – quite unusual in the context of Cohen's usually rather sober, neo-Kantian

point, however, is that 'it has to become the most holy of desires to assimilate (uns einzustimmen) to the natural tone (Naturton) of the people with whom we want to amalgamate (des Volkes, zu dem wir verschmelzen wollen)'. The Jews are therefore obliged to strive to rid themselves of any particularities (Absonderlichkeiten):

If we take pride in our tribe (Stamm) as a constant feature of our living religion, this must under no sentimental excuse – *except for defence* – be played down as an innocent private obsession (Privatliebhaberei). National ambivalence (Doppelgefühl) is not only an immoral, but an impossible thing (ibid.:139; italics in the original).

Cohen asserts that the reprehensible 'hybrid (Missgewächs)' of national 'ambivalence (Doppelgefühl)' is the exclusive product of a 'transitional period in which even the best of the Jews still count just for a Jew' (ibid.). In other words, it is nothing but an indication that surrounding society has not yet completely conceded emancipation. Cohen admits that the necessity of defence justifies temporary expressions of 'tribal' attachment, but the temptation has to be resisted 'to turn the excitement of the time of defence into a permanent attitude for the time of peace'. The point is not to let this temporary necessity seriously interrupt the process of assimilation, but to keep in mind that 'complete and unconditional Germanization (rueckhaltlose, unbedingte deutsche Naturalisierung) in no way inhibits Israelitic religion'.

Cohen accepts Lazarus' claim that 'true culture' lies in 'diversity' (Mannichfaltigkeit) (although he adds that universal human unity is equally important) but claims that this is only so 'from a bird's eye perspective'. For 'human beings from blood and flesh, who want to found a state down here' seeking 'to unite themselves into a unity of state and people (zu einer Staats- und Volkseinheit)', diversity might be an 'illicit burden (unerlaubte ... Zumuthung)'. Cohen contrasts 'humanity' and its 'ends' which are mere 'concepts of philosophy of history' to 'national unity (Volkseinheit)' which is 'a moral task (eine sittliche Aufgabe)' (ibid.:141). Aiming towards ever more intense 'unity of being and consciousness' is a 'duty' (Pflicht). On these grounds, Cohen rejects Lazarus' notion that it is a 'permanent task of the Jews' to take part in all

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discourse.

particular national cultures as a distinct element promoting universalism. The only task of the Jews is, according to Cohen, 'the preservation of monotheism' until the 'purer form of Christianity' has been attained.

For diversities other than this one, I have no time and I cannot grant asylum. The morality (Sittlichkeit) of a people (Volk) is a national one, or at least it aims at being national. Within a national collectivity (Gemeinsamkeit) there can be individual morality, but no particular morality is desirable that would be substantiated (substantiierte) in any religious groups or sects (ibid.).

Cohen insists that the Jewish reaction to the anti-Semitic attack should be not to deviate from the path of assimilation that they have already gone down quite far (ibid.:142). Once legal emancipation will have been fully translated into respective administrative policy, 'odd behaviour (Anstössigkeiten des Benehmens)' will gradually disappear and render the question of 'race' an irrelevancy. Whether or not one 'sticks to a certain particularity of mores (Besonderheit der Sitten)', emancipation and more generally, the political and state sphere, matter (ibid.:146f):

For belonging to a state is not something external or mundane; it demands the whole innermost man. One has to love its institutions as one loves those of religion; ... service to one's state must count as holy, like service to God.<sup>493</sup> But let the natural traits of the nation (Volk) – love of which lives in you no less [than in gentile Germans] as soon as your cultural consciousness has reached maturity – grow and develop without self-censure or restraint (zu rechter Unbefangenheit in euch lebendig werden) in all aspects of your way of life – including the nation's pleasures as well as its warfare. Even when you maintain your belief in positive difference, you must not lose sight of the fact that the foundations of your religiosity oblige you to hope and struggle for amalgamation (zu verwachsen) into national unity (Volksgemeinschaft) with the Christians (ibid.:147).<sup>494</sup>

Differences of positive religion are to be tolerated, but are irrelevant in social and political matters. Religiosity in a more fundamental and general sense, which is – or should be – shared by Jews and Christians alike, is the spiritual foundation of

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<sup>493</sup> 'Seinem Staate dienen zu können, muss als heilig gelten, wie Gottesdienst.'

<sup>494</sup> This passage is from the concluding section of Cohen's text that consists of three admonitions, two addressed to specific groups within Jewry (Orthodox and Reform Jews) and one towards Jewry in general. The passage quoted here is addressed to the Orthodox Jews which might explain its massive emphasis on the relevance of the state. The parallel sequence that is addressed to the Reform Jews emphasizes the relevance of religion (see *chapter 2.2.6*).

the 'ethical (sittliche)' order of the state. As his drawing a parallel between state service and service to God suggests, Cohen's (neo-Kantian) ethical-religious approach gives to the state a spiritual halo no less than Treitschke's approach does. Although Cohen is explicit about the disgust he feels about Treitschke, the demand for the Jews 'to become Germans' has a strong supporter in Cohen.

#### 2.2.5.7 NAUDH: THE UNITY OF STATE AND CHURCH AS A DEFENCE OF GERMAN NATIONALITY AGAINST JEWIFICATION

Naudh reminds Lazarus that he 'could have learned' from Hegel's 'Philosophy of History' that

'religion stands in the closest connection with the principle of the state (Staatsprincip): *the concept of God is the general foundation of a people.*' He could also have learned this from the disintegration of European Turkey, where a population using the same language cannot live within the same state because some are Muslims and the others are Christians... (Naudh 1965:200; italics in the original).<sup>495</sup>

Naudh reflects on the relation of church and state in the specific context of modern – national – society:

Since nationality has come back to life within the peoples, the talk about the separation of state and church has lost its meaning (ibid.:194).

Naudh seems to imply that the separation of state and church had a meaning as long as 'nationality' was not the hegemonic principle of social cohesion. Having Germany in mind, he might refer here to the time from the Reformation until 1871. Naudh adds that 'for us, anyway' (i.e. today), all Christian denominations have 'the essence of Christianity' in common, implying that this has not necessarily always been so.

Religion is the supreme expression of the morality (Sittlichkeit) of a people and God is the embodiment of its consciousness of right (Rechtsbewusstsein). (...) Right, morality (Sitte) and religion originate from the same source. (...) Church and state are not hostile to each other

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<sup>495</sup> Naudh is probably quoting from 'Vorlesung ueber die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte, 1830, section Bc), "Das Material seiner [des Geistes] Verwirklichung"', Hegel 1955:127. If this is what Naudh quotes, he is misquoting: Hegel does not leap (like Naudh does) from 'state' to 'people' but explicitly talks here about *states* not peoples.

(einander fremd) but exert the same task in different spheres. In the sphere of the state lie the deeds: these, though, have first been thoughts and had to negotiate with mind (Gemüth) and conscience (Gewissen), which lie in the sphere of the church. It is better and safer that the church educates conscience than that the state punishes deeds. The church does work in advance of the state in the world of thoughts, while the state merely needs to catch up with what might have escaped the church (ibid.:194f).

Naudh makes here a statement on the relation of state and (national and religious) culture that is crucial to the debate. For him, church and state differ in the functions they exert in society but together with 'Sitte' and 'Rechtsbewusstsein' they emanate from the same 'source'. Naudh seems to suggest that 'Sitte' and 'Recht' are not cosmopolitan categories (as in Kant) but emanate from the 'Volksgeist' (Hegel) or 'the general national character', a notion that reflects influences from Burke, Savigny, romanticism and the '*historische Rechtsschule*'.

Although arguing for the common origin of church and state, Naudh is not a religious thinker. For individuals with a 'will to freedom' the church is neither a good nor a bad thing but simply irrelevant. For *society as a whole*, however, it is relevant as a complement to the state, integrating 'thoughts' and 'deeds'. Naudh argues that 'the church rules only those who need it' and that 'the mere will to freedom' as well as 'the consciousness of not needing it any more' are sufficient for liberating oneself from it (ibid.:195). One does not have to fight the church: one either needs it or one ignores it (on the individual level). Naudh concludes that those who choose to fight the church must be motivated by either the intention 'to replace one church with another church' or by 'profane secret agendas'. This goes against the liberals who fought the influence of the church on the state: what the latter actually wanted was to replace the synagogue for the church.

For these reasons we have to agree completely when Herr von Treitschke says, 'the Jews are our misfortune', but we can only regret that he has not much earlier been engaged with us in the attempt to prevent this misfortune (ibid.:193).

Naudh suggests that 'nationality and liberalism are strict opposites' and considers the name of the National-Liberal party 'paradoxical'. He suggests that this party was too dependent on the approval of the Jewish press and so it is no surprise that 'it had to end as a sacrificial animal on the altar of Judaism (Judenthum)'.

National-Liberalism did not understand that the equal participation of 'two elements of such different morality (Sittlichkeit) as the Germans and the Jews' would necessarily prevent the 'healthy development of a state' (ibid.):

State freedom (staatliche Freiheit) can only be national. It can only mean the freedom of a people to live and to develop according to its natural characteristics (ibid.:194).

Naudh suggests that 'the Jews' dragged the National-Liberal party into the anti-Catholic 'Kulturkampf' because the doctrine of the separation of state and church was instrumental in removing the most important obstacle for their achieving hegemony. 'Church influence on the state', Naudh argues, is 'the best protection for the Germans', while the separation of state and church actually meant making the state Jewish.

When Naudh mentions 'natural characteristics' he understands these, differing from Treitschke and the other interlocutors, in an unequivocally racial sense. Naudh argues for example that the lack of a sense of 'honour' that gives the Jews an advantage in competition with Aryans in civil society is grounded in their physical 'organization' which has been kept identical through millennia of 'in-breeding'.

Naudh also rejects Treitschke's notion that intermarriage was one possible strategy to achieve 'amalgamation':

Products of racial mixing would not share the characteristics of both parents to equal degree, but would be predominantly Jewish by far, as experience from animal breeding shows without doubt that constancy and hereditary predominance are directly relational to the duration of how long a race has propagated through pure in-breeding (ibid.:193).

Anyway, Naudh finds that intermarriage on a larger scale is unlikely. Only a 'German girl' who was desperately poor would be able to overcome the moral repulsion at the 'unnatural obscenity (widernatuerliche Unzucht)' of marrying a Jew. Because the Jews regard marriage – like everything else – a mere matter of money, no (male) Jew would be interested in a German girl if she is poor (ibid.:192). The likelihood of the reverse case of an impoverished German man marrying a rich Jewish woman is negligible, and apart from that, there are only 'rare cases of pathological deviation (krankhafter Verirrung)'.



Naudh adopts the discourse of 'race' to explain and 'naturalize' phenomena that he holds can be observed in society, while Treitschke claims to have observed the same phenomena (specifically Jewish economic practices and a generic 'disgust' of Christian Germans for Jews) without adopting the terminology of 'race' explicitly.

On the other main topic that Naudh is discussing, his dissent seems also to be one of degree rather than of principle: while both Treitschke and his liberal critics stick to the quintessential liberal principle of the separation of church and state, they all – including Naudh – agree on the necessity for some kind of cultural-moral cohesion that underpins the state while not being part of the state: national culture. Further, everybody – including the Jewish authors – seems to agree that this culture is – in the German case – more or less Christian. While Naudh differs in emphasizing the common origin of state and religion in national character and its 'Sittlichkeit', his notion of a division of labour between state and church is not incompatible with the conceptions held by Treitschke as well as his critics.

The partly critical and partly affirmative way Naudh relates to Treitschke also mirrors that of some of the other contributors. Like Bresslau,<sup>496</sup> Naudh expresses the hope that Treitschke will recognize where the 'true nature' of his overall political framework is rooted. Obviously, the definition of what exactly this truth is, is different: while Bresslau and others oppose liberal patriotism to illiberal nationalism, Naudh claims that nationalism is incompatible with liberalism, and denies any consistency to the patriotic, National-Liberal argument. For Naudh, religion is constitutive (although not exclusively) of national culture to such an extent that religious difference by necessity undermines national unity and the viability of the national state. Although all the liberal contributors to the debate see the national state as rooted in some form of national culture, they tend to accord less relevance to religion in this context. Naudh challenges this assumption and claims that the national community cannot tolerate contradictions within national culture. Naudh implies that the mistaken liberal belief that minor contradictions would not undermine the nation is

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<sup>496</sup> Cp. *chapter 2.2.1.2* (Bresslau 1965a:56f)

motivated by the particularist interests of a small selfish section of society: the 'ethno-class'<sup>497</sup> of the capitalists/Jews who stand behind the liberal creed.

#### 2.2.5.8 MOMMSEN: THE COSTS AND THE PAINS OF BECOMING A NATION

Mommsen argues that the nation has been created by 'the sentiment of the larger community' (die Empfindung der grossen Zusammengehörigkeit) (Mommsen 1965b:212), although there might still remain a feeling of 'closer sympathy' (based on memories and feelings) towards the 'so called closer compatriots' (den sogenannten engeren Landsleuten) on the level of 'the various German tribes (Stämme)'. The nation is based on solidarity between and 'in a certain sense, amalgamation' of those tribes. The 'diversity' (Mannichfaltigkeit) of their skills and characteristics should be a cause of enjoyment and is also functional for the necessities of a large state. Mommsen implies that 'the status of the Jews within our people' is not essentially different 'from that of the Saxons or Pommeranians'.

Mommsen quotes the French anthropologist Jean Louis Armand Quatrefages,<sup>498</sup> who had argued that only some central German states were of mainly Germanic descent while the Prussians were mainly Slavonic. This difference has become irrelevant, however, once they have marched together on the battlefield:

Anybody who is really familiar with history will know that transformation of the nationality – a gradual development with numerous and manifold transitions – is not a rarity. Historically as well as practically only the living is everywhere in the right. Just as the descendants of the French colony in Berlin are by no means Frenchmen born in Germany, so their Jewish compatriots are nothing less than Germans (ibid.:213).

In this paragraph Mommsen formulates

- a general historical law, or definition: nationality is not a stable phenomenon but changes in the course of historical development,

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<sup>497</sup> With this I mean that Naudh's argument evokes the existence of a group of concrete people who are at the same time both an economic class (in Weber's sense of the word) and an ethnic group.

<sup>498</sup> Quatrefage's work was based on craniological research (Mendes-Flohr; Reinhartz 1980:287).

- a more general aphorism: '*Historisch wie praktisch hat eben ueberall nur der Lebende Recht*',<sup>499</sup>
- and two historical examples: the French colony in Berlin and the German Jews.

Mommsen argues that the present is neither determined, nor can be validated, by the past. The particularisms of the past have to disappear and give way to the new social form, the patriotic order which is 'in the right' against the residues of the past because it is constituted by 'the living' and sails with the winds of progress and historical dynamic. The notion that the present is *in the right* against the past gives it legitimacy and superiority. Mommsen's point is that the origins of a group of persons do not and cannot – or rather, *ought not* – determine the present status of its members. As this is true – by definition – of the *legal* status of citizens, Mommsen formulates here a fundamental element of liberal thought. However, the formulation omits that the actual social status of the *empirical* individual in society is – to a greater or lesser extent – indeed determined by the past: society is as much the present as it is the past in crystallized form. In the structures as well as the specific dynamics that together constitute society the past does exert some degree of power over the present; even the particular achievements, talents or productivity of the (present) *individual* owe more to the totality of achievements and sufferings that have happened in the past than the individual might be able to realize.

On closer inspection, Mommsen's throwaway remark reveals a crucial paradox of his (i.e., the liberal) concept of history and the nation. The new order – the present social order as well as the present form of state – preserves the memory that it has been born out of the struggle against the particularisms and injustices of the old order, pointing to the latter's historicity. At the same time, however, the order that rules in the present claims to be 'in the right' not only against the past ('historically') but also against competing claims in the present ('practically').<sup>500</sup> This implication of Mommsen's conception of history is crucial

<sup>499</sup> The untranslatable '*eben*' marks this as a universally accepted, indisputable statement.

<sup>500</sup> Not only is the meaning of the word '*praktisch*' obscure, but it would be difficult to say who exactly '*der Lebende*' is. In reality, there are many different *Lebende* and they all claim to be 'in the right'. A singular and non-antagonistic subject *der Lebende* that *hat Recht* only exists in the bourgeois imagination that finds that (completely) bourgeois society exists as a perfect (natural,

to his view of Jewishness as particularism and his demand it must disappear just as much as 'Saxonianism' is disappearing. The question needed to be raised whether the anachronistic element, the remainder marginalized by progress, may not to some extent be in the right against the victorious present: if only as a reminder of the historicity of the present and its finite, contingent character.<sup>501</sup>

After this programmatic statement, Mommsen discusses the situation of Jewry in modern as opposed to ancient times. The 'essential difference' (der wesentliche Gegensatz) is that 'the old world did not know what we call today the national state' (ibid.:213).

(...) in antiquity one did not conceive of citizenry (Staatsbuergerthum) as homogeneous and roughly coextensive with linguistic area, the concept that is now fundamental to any politics (welches heute den Grund jeder politischen Gestaltung bildet).

Because of the non-national character of the state in antiquity, the Jews managed to maintain 'a certain national identity' (nationale Geschlossenheit) 'even beyond the demise of their state'.<sup>502</sup> Although they tended to use the prevailing world languages and were immersed in the respectively valid standard of education and culture (Bildung), their best writers were 'totally Jewish, conscious representatives of Jewry' (ganz und voll Juden und bewusste Vertreter des Judentums) (ibid.:214). Mommsen argues that such a phenomenon does not exist anymore:

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as it were) 'equilibrium' where the only remaining form of conflict is 'competition' (which in the *classless society of burghers* becomes a peaceful mechanism that merely helps distributing the wealth that has been produced collectively by all productive members of society, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> [possibly even 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>] estates in harmonious unity).

<sup>501</sup> The cynicism of Mommsen's 'positivist' (or 'presentist') remark becomes apparent if contrasted with Ferdinand Freiligrath's famous poem from July 1848, 'The Dead [speak] to the Living (Die Todten an die Lebenden)' (first published by Karl Marx in 'Neue Rheinische Zeitung' and subsequently widely disseminated as a leaflet, despite being banned in Prussia) in which the revolutionaries who had been shot on the Berlin barricades in March 1848 spoke to those who survived them (Dressen 1999:128-130). Freiligrath makes very clear that *the dead* are 'in the right' against those who (between April and July 1848) squandered the historical chance to topple the Prussian monarchy that had been opened up by the revolutionaries: '*Und Alles feig durch euch verscherzt was trotzig wir errungen!*'.

<sup>502</sup> Mommsen silently identifies here 'the state in antiquity' with the Greek and Roman examples which have been either city-states or Empires. His formulation 'even after the demise of their [the Jews'] state', however, presupposes that at least the Jews had a national state back then. Because he does not develop this, it is not clear whether Mommsen is aware of this inconsistency; he might perhaps have thought of the ancient Jewish state as an exception – a national state *avant la lettre*.

All eminent works created by Jews in modern times are of the culture of the nation, of which this particular Jew is a member. (...) the German Israelite stands in the middle of German literary life just as the English Israelite in the middle of the English one.

Mommsen concedes that Graetz's 'Talmudic history scribblings (die talmudistische Geschichtsschreiberei von Graetz)' are an exception but marginal to Jewish literary life.

The failure to grasp the difference between modern and ancient conceptions of state, nationality and culture is 'the real location of that delusion which recently has gripped the masses', and of which Treitschke is the 'prophet'. Mommsen now addresses Treitschke's original pamphlet directly:

What does it mean that he demands that our Jewish compatriots become Germans? They are Germans already, just as I am, and just as he is. He may be more virtuous than they are; but do virtues make a German?

Mommsen argues that even if certain defects were actual characteristics of fellow citizens 'of this or that category' this would not warrant 'removing them from the ranks of the Germans' (ibid.:215). Mommsen stresses that 'it must not at all be denied' that the peculiarities of 'the persons of Jewish descent living among us' (ibid.:216) are stronger (and are also felt to be stronger) than 'those of other tribes and even nations'. This is a result of 'the millennial suppression of German Semites by German Christians' which has been 'equally pernicious for either side' – although hatred of the Jews may have at the same time also provoked and developed the talents of German Jews. Mommsen rejects both the cult and the fear of the Jews that he sees as reciprocal (ibid.:217). Both are 'most simple-minded confusions'. In the case of the Jews as elsewhere, 'light and shadow are mixed'.

Central to Mommsen's argument is his re-appropriation of a formulation famously coined by him in his 'History of Rome', which Treitschke had quoted in his most recent statement:

Without doubt the Jews are an element of tribal decomposition in Germany just as they once were an element of national decomposition in the Roman state. This is why in the German capital, where the tribes actually mingle more thoroughly than anywhere else, the Jews hold a position for which they are envied in other places (ibid.).

Mommsen likens '*national* decomposition' – to which the Jews contributed in the Roman Empire – to '*tribal* decomposition' – to which the Jews now contribute in the German Empire. The building of Rome, which was not a nation state, was based on the decomposition of nations; the building of Germany, which is a nation state, is based on the decomposition of tribes. 'Processes of decomposition are often necessary, but they are never pleasant'. Mommsen proceeds here to the key statement of his argument:

I am not so estranged from my homeland, however, that I would not painfully feel [the loss of] something I used to have and that my children will miss. But the happiness of children and the pride of men (Kinderglueck und Männerstolz) do not go together. A certain amount of mutual grinding down [of their peculiarities] (ein gewisses Abschleifen der Stämme an einander) on the part of the tribes is demanded unconditionally by the current situation (durch die Verhältnisse unbedingt geboten), i.e. the formation of a German nationality that is not identical with any particular tribe (Landsmannschaft). The big cities, and first of all Berlin, are its natural protagonists. I do not consider it at all a misfortune that the Jews have been active in this direction for generations. It is my opinion that Providence, much more than Herr Stöcker, has understood very well why a few percent of Israel had to be added to form the Germanic metal (ibid.).

Mommsen formulates here a programmatic view of the process of nation-building, within which framework he defines the role of the Jews. He invokes the transition from tribal particularism to national statehood as a necessary and welcome historical process of progress that involves both gain and loss. On the side of loss is the 'happiness of children', on the side of gain is the 'pride of men'. This characterizes the nation building process as one of maturing and growing up. 'Männerstolz', the 'pride of men', underlines that this is imagined as a male affair. The trope of 'growing up' presents the process as natural and led by objective, not arbitrary forces and legitimizes the loss of the 'happiness of children'. A second element of the imagery is taken from the productive processes of handicraft or industry. Like fine wooden furnitures, the tribes have to 'grind down' their edges and the rough surfaces of their particularity; like a solid metal, they have to be smelted and amalgamated in a determinate ratio. Only as an ironic aside against the clerical Jew-baiter Stöcker, does Mommsen refer to 'Providence' as the subject of this process: the one who does the smelting and who knows the correct formula. The liberal historian does not need 'divine

Providence' to refer to – the objectivity of the historical process itself is authority enough.

The notion of the loss of the 'happiness of children' connects the artisanal metaphor of the 'grinding down' to the notion of 'growing up'. It is implied that growing up is a process of adaptation and subordination to an adult world. The grown up man is allowed – perhaps even expected – to have melancholy and nostalgic feelings about the lost 'happiness of childhood', but these have to be mastered for the greater benefit of adult manhood. The building of the nation is imagined as the growing up of a boy: the grinding down of the childish particularities of the tribes 'is demanded unconditionally by the current situation'. The pre-national (tribal) memory has to be mastered and sublimated to regional folklore. The man (and likewise, the nation) who is not able to control and sublimate his (and likewise, its) tribal memory and master his (its) melancholia reveals his (its) immaturity. He will not be able to hold his own in the modern world. As for the Jewish question, the conclusion is: it might be 'painful', but a few percent of Jews have to be in that national melting pot to help making that Germanic metal nice and strong.

#### 2.2.5.9 TREITSCHKE: ... RIGHT ALL ALONG

In his response to Mommsen, Treitschke holds that the Jews promote 'homeless cosmopolitanism (heimathloses Weltbuergerthum)' and rejects Mommsen's claim that the Jewish contribution to the 'decomposition of the German tribes' was beneficial to the process of German nation-building. Those 'elements of Jewry' who 'do what they can to destroy the Germans' national pride and pleasure in the fatherland' are 'hostile to all German being (allem deutschen Wesen feindlich)' (Treitschke 1965b:228).

Treitschke also reaffirms his view that religion mattered in the political debate. While Mommsen – according to Treitschke – disregards the relevance of religious difference, Treitschke states that 'maturing civilization (die reifende Cultur) will lead our deeply religious people (Volk) back to purer and stronger ecclesiastical (kirchliches) life'. Treitschke sees therefore polemics by Jews

against Christian theology as ‘attacks on the foundations of our morality (Gesittung)’ (ibid.).

The main point in Treitschke’s response is the claim that Mommsen confirmed Treitschke’s central contention:

I have acknowledged that many of our Jewish fellow citizens have long become good Germans, and I have merely regretted that others still keep themselves principally in a distance from our national life. Mommsen responded: ‘the Jews are Germans as much as he and me’, but then proceeds emphasizing that some of these ‘Germans’ fancy themselves in a national-Jewish segregation (Sonderleben). Alas, he says in other words exactly the same as what I say. I believe, though, that my expression was more accurate (ibid.).

Since Mommsen – according to Treitschke – does not disagree in substance, Treitschke asserts that Mommsen merely ‘finds my intervention in the Jewish question inopportune’. However, articulating freely ‘a social problem that all the world feels to exist’ is more appropriate than keeping politely silent about it.

Treitschke’s strategy of defence against Mommsen consists of three elements:

- *first*, he shows that Mommsen’s argument is inconsistent in itself. He exploits Mommsen’s failure to distinguish clearly enough a normative claim to legal equality from an account of actual (socio-cultural) equality or difference, while both Treitschke and Mommsen presuppose that legal equality would or should reflect (or rather, be a reward for) actual (socio-cultural) equality.
- *Second*, Treitschke points out disagreement on the relevance of religion for nation-building and on the actual distribution of power between Jewish and Christian Germans. Here Treitschke merely repeats unwarranted claims about the power of the Jews.
- *Third*, Treitschke claims that Mommsen and himself agree in substance while his own position differs merely in being more straightforward and honest than Mommsen’s. Playing down the disagreements, he reduces the thrust of Mommsen’s criticism to the tactical question of whether Treitschke’s intervention has been ‘opportune’ or not. The overall effect of Treitschke’s response is the implication that Mommsen lacks the courage of his opinions.



In this reply, the two faces of Treitschke's attitude are as clearly pronounced as in his original contribution: a nationalism that demands complete social and spiritual assimilation is intertwined with a phantasmagoric vision of a deeply hostile and immensely powerful *Judenthum*. The way the latter is pictured makes assimilation appear neither possible nor really desirable; these two basic elements of Treitschke's position constitute an unresolvable contradiction to each other.

### 2.2.6 The relationship between Christian and Jewish religion

Treitschke discusses religion almost exclusively under the aspect of its relevance for the state (cp. the previous chapter). Only when Lazarus and Cohen used what they saw as the close affinity between Judaism and Christianity as evidence for the cultural affinity between German Christians and Jews, did Treitschke respond with some remarks on the issue. However, even these were more of historical than of theological character.

In a long and detailed discussion supported by a substantial number of references to other authors, *Lazarus* argues that Christianity is both historically and theologically closely related to Judaism, and also that there is a close affinity between Judaism and the concept of the modern state. The starting point for both strands of Lazarus' argument is the destruction of the Temple, the 'enormous defeat' (Lazarus 1880:44) for the Jewish people. The Jews were lifted 'out of the ashes of the Temple on Zion' (ibid.:44f) by a 'Phoenix' which was the 'ideal concept of humanity' of Christian religion as first formulated by its Jewish founders. What distinguished the Christians amongst other groups of Jewry was that they 'deliberately withdrew from the [Jewish] national struggle' and thus arrived at a position where they were able to reformulate the original Jewish concepts of monotheism and of the unity of a single humanity (expressed in the image of one universal flock led by one shepherd). These two central motives that are common to Judaism and Christianity are also pivotal to the Jews' relation to the state (especially the modern state).<sup>503</sup> Lazarus rejects Christian polemics against the Talmud – he mentions Eisenmenger, Pfefferkorn and Rohling – as misleading because they one-sidedly over-emphasized the formalistic characteristics of the Talmudic literature and ignored that there is now a 'new

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<sup>503</sup> Lazarus gives a long quote from declarations agreed on by the first and second *Israelitic Synods*, the first of which took place in 1869 in Leipzig, the second in Augsburg (Lazarus does not mention the year). These stress that Judaism respects and embraces the 'principles of the new society and the *Rechtsstaat*' (ibid.:45) and emphasises that they go back to the same universalist principles of humanity and equality. The second Synod emphasised that 'the consciousness of humanity as a whole (das Gesamtbewusstsein der Menschheit)' is increasingly filled by 'true knowledge of God (wahre Gotteserkenntnis)' and 'pure morality (reine Sittlichkeit)'. It interpreted these as an approximation to the aims that always have led Judaism on its path through history (ibid.:46). Lazarus adds to this some quotes taken from Goethe, the ethnologist Peschel and, the philosopher Lotze and finally Ernest Renan, all of whom testify to the affinity of Judaism to Christianity and the principles of the modern state.

Rabbinism' that has overcome many defects of the old one (ibid.:50f)<sup>504</sup>. Lazarus points out that a mother does not have to die 'after she has given birth to a child' (ibid.:40), a metaphor for his rejecting a mechanistic concept of historical progress according to which an older historical form was not legitimized to continue to exist alongside a newer historical form. In the same mould, Judaism ought to continue to exist even after having 'given birth' to Christianity. Judaism's motherly function is hereby to remind Christianity that it is not yet what it might or should become: 'Judaism (Judenthum) as the mother of Christianity will advance the education of Christianity through its criticism' (ibid.:41). Lazarus argues that it is a 'genuinely Christian conviction' (ibid.:22) that Jews are not inferior. To support this claim, he quotes several long passages from Luther's writings.<sup>505</sup> Luther's later anti-Jewish statements can be explained by his disappointment about the Jews not converting to the 'purified' religion of the Reformation.<sup>506</sup>

*Treitschke* holds<sup>507</sup> against the concept of a close affinity between Judaism and Christianity that after 'the Jews crucified Jesus', Christianity 'overcame' Judaism:

Every young spiritual (geistige) power that is victorious against an older one is itself the offspring of its adversary. The greatness of the Christian doctrine that originated from a Semitic people lies in its having overcome Semitism (Semitenthum) and having become the universal church (Weltkirche) (*Treitschke* 1896c:61f).

*Treitschke* concedes that Christianity originated from Judaism but insists that its specific identity lies in its difference from the defeated precursor – whom it has to continue fighting in case it should signal a recovery. *Treitschke* argues in not a theological but a secular historical-philosophical way. His interest is less with the

<sup>504</sup> Lazarus argues that the modernist spirit of the first *Israelitic Synod* in Leipzig had been shared by all participants irrespective of their allegiance to one of the strands within Jewry including the Orthodox Jews who embrace and appreciate 'the whole of the development' of Jewish thinking, 'only perhaps a bit more than they themselves would know' (ibid.:54). Amongst others, Lazarus quotes Ernest Renan's praise of the Talmud and Judaism in general for its rationalism: a religion that links its adherents through the *praxis* of observing rules in everyday life, rather than through dogma, is a 'reasonable' religion.

<sup>505</sup> Luther's works, Erlanger edition vol. 29 pages 47f; 74

<sup>506</sup> Lazarus emphasizes that Luther demanded the Jews be given equal economic rights so that they would not be driven to usury: one should allow the Jews 'to participate in trade and production so that they could gain reason and space enough to dwell with and around us (mit lassen werben und aerbeiten, damit sie Ursach und Raum gewinnen, bei und umb uns zu seyn)' (ibid.:24).

actual content of the two religions and their theological differences but with Judaism and Christianity as 'spiritual powers' (*geistige Mächte*), i.e. as historical agents in a vaguely Hegelian sense. For Treitschke there is less continuity between Judaism and Christianity than the life and death struggle between two actors the second of which overcomes the former (again in a Hegelian sense). While Treitschke's view has the merit of taking the actuality of the Christian-Jewish conflict more into account than for example Paulus Cassel's integrative theology seems to do,<sup>508</sup> Treitschke simply takes the positivity of historical victory as evidence of truth, reason and legitimacy.

Treitschke's view of antagonism and rupture between Judaism and Christianity was shared by *Naudh* who reformulated it in a language that included the rhetoric of 'race' as well as a social-economical dimension. Naudh argues it was a 'mistake' of Christianity to refer to 'the Jewish legend' – as if a historically independent actor 'Christianity' had existed then and had arbitrarily chosen to 'refer to' some aspects of Judaism. Naudh seems to see the actual content of religion as consisting of 'legends' that are chosen by movements which in turn are essentially social-economic in nature (cp. above the quote by Naudh in 2.2.4; Naudh 1965:185f). He denies the originality of central aspects of Judaism: not even monotheism was specifically Jewish but it was generally Mediterranean. While Moses 'brought his God from Egypt' (*ibid.*:186), monotheistic elements could even be found in the concept of 'fate', as for example in the *Iliad*.<sup>509</sup> The essential difference between Judaism and Christianity became apparent in the course of its evolution: Christianity mostly 'developed within the peoples of the Aryan family' among whom he includes Greeks, Romans, Celts, Germanic and Slavonic peoples. He adds that within these peoples, *Christianity* actually is more pervasive than *the Christian church*, because the church carries too much 'Jewish ballast': he names fanaticism and

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<sup>507</sup> The following quotes are from Treitschke's comments on Paulus Cassel.

<sup>508</sup> However, Cassel's job was to convert Jews, which prompted some Jewish commentators to reject his 'support' as unwelcome. The fact that Treitschke attacks so aggressively a converted Jew whose business is to convert more Jews to Protestantism (he accuses Cassel of 'quarrelsome offensive racial arrogance' [*händelsuechtiger, beleidigender Rassenduenkel*] [*ibid.*:60]) seems to be motivated by ill-feeling towards the converted.

<sup>509</sup> Although 'monotheistic elements' do not make monotheism, this observation is not wrong, but it merely illustrates the interconnectedness of *all* ancient mediterranean cultures irrespective of 'race' (or rather, of the grammatical structure of the 'Semitic' or 'Indo-European' languages people used).

intolerance as the after-effects of the Jewish influence on the church. Nevertheless, despite the Church, Christianity is the 'expression of Aryan conscience and idealism' while it never really managed to 'win over' the Jews.

Among all contributors, *Hermann Cohen* was the one who paid most attention to the actual content of the two religions.<sup>510</sup> He writes that Treitschke's position most significantly differs from other anti-Jewish texts in having thrown up (again) the issue of religion (Cohen 1965:125). The thrust of Cohen's argument is the assertion of commonality between 'Israelites' and Christians, while rejecting at the same time the pressure on the former to convert. He relates that the (anti-Catholic) 'Kulturkampf' had been criticized for lacking in 'positive religious thought' (ibid.:130) and asserts the necessity to discuss religion – in its own terms – in the context of national history. He stresses that 'the German people' has been and will remain 'a religious one' and that 'national history (vaterländische Geschichte)' since the 16<sup>th</sup> century had been driven by the 'religious spirit of the German people'.

The pivot of Cohen's argument is his opposition of two alternative pairs of concepts, 'religions' vs 'denominations (*Konfessionen*)' (as used by Treitschke) and 'religion' vs 'forms of religion (*Glaubensarten*)' (as used by Cohen drawing on Kant).

Cohen asserts that 'the distinction between religion and denomination' is central to Treitschke's argument. Treitschke constructs a close affinity between the two Christian denominations as mere *Konfessionen* within the same religion (downplaying the brutality of their actual mutual history)<sup>511</sup> while at the same time excluding Judaism as 'the religion of an alien tribe'. This construction rules out the possibility that Judaism could amalgamate together with the Christian confessions into what in the 'messianic-humanistic' conception had been

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<sup>510</sup> Cohen asserts that his profession as a teacher of 'German philosophy' obliges him to 'confess' (Cohen 1965:126). Since his teaching is intrinsically related to religious issues, he feels he has to legitimate himself before the 'Protestant men who not only granted me citizenship but also the religious trust to be teaching as one of them amongst their number'. Cohen will argue not as a representative of a 'Jewish party' but as a 'representative of philosophy at a German university who confesses to Israelitic monotheism'. Although this is 'painful (peinlich)' to him, he will also have to criticize (entgegenzutreten) 'in some points' his co-religionists (Glaubensgenossen). Nevertheless, Cohen confesses to the moral obligation to take sides with the 'co-religionist who is threatened in his belief' (ibid.:145).

<sup>511</sup> Meyer holds against this view that the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism have been no less murderous than those between Christianity and Judaism (Meyer 1880b:17f).

envisaged as 'a purer form of Christianity' (ibid.). This possibility, however, is just what Cohen argues for.

Cohen introduces Kant's distinction between *Religion* as a universally valid and unitary concept and 'forms of religion' (Glaubensarten)<sup>512</sup> as the historically specific, diverse and contingent 'vehicles' of *Religion* (ibid.:126f). Cohen asserts that 'Israelitic monotheism' and 'Protestant Christianity' are different as vehicles only, but are identical as *Religion*. Therefore it is possible that they eventually will converge into 'a purer form of religion'.

Cohen's argument interconnects Israelitic and (Protestant) Christian theology with the concepts of modern ethics and the modern state. In the center of this web of connections sits Kant's critical philosophy that mediates these elements with each other and – being in turn crucial to German national consciousness as Cohen understands it – with German national history.

Cohen names 'the spiritual character of God (Geistigkeit Gottes)' and 'the messianic promise (Verheissung)' as the two defining features of Israelitic monotheism. These two notions concern the nature of God as well as the 'moral ideal of a human species being (sittliche Ideal des Menschengeschlechts)' (ibid.:127). Cohen emphasizes that the Prophets already had a universalistic concept of the Israelitic God as a father-like shepherd of all of humanity, not merely of the people of Israel. 'One issue though failed to come to full expression in this deepening (Vertiefung) of the concept of God (Gottesidee)' (ibid.:128), asserts Cohen: this 'one issue' has been contributed by Christianity which drew on 'the Greek spirit'.

The idea that God has become Man (Menschwerdung Gottes) has internalized (verinnerlicht) the notion of the relationship between Man and God. As the dogmatic form of the humanization of God, it realizes the cultural-historical mission of humanizing religion (ibid.:128).

Without this 'mission' having been fulfilled, the 'autonomy of the moral law (Sittengesetz), the freedom to submit under its unconditional imperative (unbedingte Sittengebot)', would be inconceivable. 'The idealistic concept of morality (Sittlichkeit), (...) the holy of holies of Kantian teaching (Lehre) ...

which we Germans appreciate as the ultimate treasure of national wisdom against all modern peoples', is rooted in the enthusiasm and rigorism of the ethics of the Prophets. Even the Kantian concept of the free will is anticipated in the Talmud, when it is stated that 'everything is in God's hand except the fear of God' (ibid.:129). However, 'the derivation of the *Sittengesetz* from the concept of legislating reason (gesetzgebende Vernunft)' which is fundamental to Kant's concept of autonomy cannot historically be understood 'without the Christological form of humanising the divine'.

'This kind of Christianity is shared by all modern Israelites, whether we be aware of it or not'. However, there is no need for the Israelites to convert since 'we know that – the necessity to humanize the moral (des Sittlichen) notwithstanding – a core of the old God of the Prophets has to remain exempt from humanization'. In this aspect, which is 'not only cosmological', 'all Christians are Israelites'. Matters are even, as it were: the Christians will always remain Israelites just as much as 'modern Israelites' are Christians. In Cohen's theological-philosophical-historical argument, there is neither a necessity to convert, nor any fundamental obstacle for both 'Glaubensarten' to converge in the future.

After these more general considerations, Cohen turns more specifically to the German situation. He argues that the religious development of the Jews, and in particular that of the German Jews 'proceeds in the historical tendency of German *Protestantism* [italics in the original]' (ibid.:131):

*For the first time since the apogee of Jewish spirit in the Arab-Spanish period, the Jewish tribe has developed again a universal cultural life within the German people (italics in the original).*

Cohen mentions that Jews were amongst the first to embrace Kantian philosophy and that they 'realized their religious development through participation in German culture, so manifesting their being Germans'.<sup>513</sup> The 'deep commotion

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<sup>512</sup> Cohen quotes (without reference) a footnote from Kant's 'Perpetual Peace (First Supplement: On the Guarantee of a Perpetual Peace)' (Kant 1971:114). Reiss translates 'Glaubensarten' with 'confessions'.

<sup>513</sup> In an aside on Felix Mendelssohn, Cohen plays down the relevance of conversions. He asserts that Felix Mendelssohn did not care much about his Jewishness and seems not even to have been aware of his grandfather's (Moses Mendelssohn) relevance; however, it was not conversion to Christianity but his (Jewish) 'religious blood' turning him 'towards oratorio not opera' that enabled him to direct Bach's *Matthaeus Passion*.

of the mind' when listening to Bach is not a mere matter of aesthetics. Commonality in being touched by Bach's music and poetry '*is commonality in religious feeling – as far as such commonality is necessary ... in a modern civilized people (in einem modernen Culturvolk)*' (ibid.:133; italics in the original). With Kant's philosophy and Bach's music, Cohen refers thus to two crucial instances of German (Protestant) culture that exemplify his concept of *Religion* as transcending the differences of *Glaubensarten*. Jewish Germans have been crucially involved in their development.

In Cohen's conception, religion and nationality are closely intertwined. Although the nation remains central to his argument, he asserts that the 'Jewish question' is essentially a religious question. He argues that 'the *backwards trend in religion (die religiöse Rueckwärtsbewegung* [italics in the original]) is the real determining cause of the attack that we are suffering in the new Empire (Reich)' (ibid.:144). He pleads that dealing with the Israelitic religion 'as a religion' seems the best and most honest way of contributing to 'the solution of the Jewish question in a national sense'. Cohen admits a decline of religiosity amongst Jews,<sup>514</sup> but holds that it is declining less than amongst Christians. 'If we are to amalgamate into the German people', which presupposes a 'community of religious foundation' (ibid.:146), religiosity as (each group's) 'specific contribution to the national community' has to be 'preserved and cultivated': *Nation needs Religion*, and in whichever vehicle (*Glaubensart*) it might come, *Religion* needs to be cherished and furthered in the interest of nation-building.<sup>515</sup> The 'backwards trend in religion' that underlies the anti-Jewish campaign is

<sup>514</sup> Cohen contrasts the accusation of Jewish 'frivolity' in religious affairs with the activity 'without any state support' of *reformed* Jewish communities, who are 'seen as suspect by those parts of the community who, *protected by the state*, stick to the old forms' (italics in the original).

<sup>515</sup> Cohen rejects Lazarus' conception that nationality consists in a common subjective appropriation of a number of *objective* factors, including descent, language and statehood, but not including religion (cp. *chapter 2.2.5.4*). For Cohen, religion (in the sense of religiosity) is as much an objective factor as the others in Lazarus' list. Furthermore, every single one of Lazarus' objective factors is neither necessary nor sufficient, while they all are overruled by '*objective conviction (Ueberzeugung)* of commonly existing religious foundation' (ibid.:149) as it defines 'a modern civilized nation (modernen Culturvolkes)'. This 'conviction' is for Cohen not a mere subjective feeling or opinion but an 'emotional entity (fühlbar Ding)', i.e. also an *objectivity*. The common experience of (objective) religiosity can easily make up for the lack of any of the other 'criteria' from Lazarus' list, including 'common descent'. Cohen asserts that this common religiosity exists between Christian and Jewish Germans, denials by 'spiteful or bigoted (gehässige oder bornirte) people' notwithstanding, and it 'will grow and blossom to the greater honour of the German name and to the best of German morality (Sittlichkeit)' (ibid.).



therefore anti-national. In the same vein, he admonishes the Reform Jews<sup>516</sup> against mistaking a denigration of (Jewish) religion as a proof of 'being German' and demands:

Respect and learn to understand your Israelitic monotheism, preserve it in your mind (*Gemueth*) and make it the religious guidance (*Richtschnur*) of your existence that all human beings need: then you will feel as one with what modern culture (*Bildung*) calls the spirit of Christianity, and the differences in the form of catechism will not disturb that commonality of religious foundation that is necessary for a unified and spiritually harmonious national community (*eine einheitliche, im Gemuethe harmonisirte Volksgemeinschaft*) (*ibid.*:147).

Since the identity of Protestant spirit and that of modern Judaism is 'the most effective glue (*Bindemittel*) for an intimate national amalgamation (*innige nationale Verschmelzung*)' he also urges his Jewish readers to show 'respect and piety' towards Christian religious dogma (*ibid.*:148).<sup>517</sup>

<sup>516</sup> This argument parallels his address to the Orthodox Jews stressing the relevance and ethical gravity of the state (cp. previous chapter).

<sup>517</sup> Philippson (*AZ 16.3.1880*, No 11:162-4) points out that Cohen is ambivalent about whether Protestantism is already the higher form of Christianity that would allow Judaism to 'dissolve into it', or 'not yet'. Nevertheless, Philippson remarks sarcastically, Cohen seems to see himself already there, ahead of the field. He holds against Cohen that any 'higher unification' with Judaism is not immediately imminent because Protestantism itself is divided into many sects and subdivisions (*ibid.*:163). Philippson accuses Cohen of 'wishful thinking' in this context. In particular he takes issue with his formulation that Christianity needs to take 'a purer form' (*ibid.*:164). He suggests that Cohen uses the concept 'form' to make the necessary process appear easier and more imminent than it actually is: he argues that form corresponds to and follows from essence (except in the case of 'empty' forms that simply collapse and disappear) and concludes that Christianity needs 'a purer essence' rather than just 'a purer form'.

Against the claim the Jews constituted a danger for Christian religion, *Bamberger* holds that 'surprisingly few' Jews had a part in the critique of religion (*Glaubenskritik*) of the Enlightenment, while Fichte (whom Treitschke quotes as 'one of the most pure and powerful representatives of Germanic essence (*Wesen*)') predicted the imminent replacement of Christian religion by reason (*Vernunft*). He concludes that although the Germans were without doubt a Christian people (*Volk*) as Treitschke claimed, they were less Christian than others. *Bamberger* quotes Treitschke himself pointing to growing disbelief amongst large sections of the German people (*Bamberger 1965:174*). In a similar vein, *Joël*, 'being a teacher of religion' himself, states that he shares with Treitschke the 'pain' about the fact that 'large sections (*breite Schichten*) of the people fell prey to disbelief'. However, the sources of disbelief in Germany are not Jewish: *Joël* points to Hegel's 'so called pantheism' that is a 'disguised atheism'. Hegel's students, including the 'young Germany', are 'men idolizing themselves (*sich selbst vergoetternde Menschen*)'. *Joël* names Feuerbach, Moleschott and Vogt, none of whom were Jewish. Schopenhauer, 'a fanatic of atheism', not only was not a Jew but hated the Jews as 'the Swiss Guard of theism' (*Joël 1965:17*). He argues that Strauss, Hartmann and 'Häckel-Darwin' have been more influential than the 'occasional tactlessness' of any Jewish writers. This leads *Joël* to point out a contradiction in Treitschke's argument: 'You present yourself as a pious and ecclesiastically minded man. I am indeed the last person who would not find that worth applauding. But why then do you accept the arguments of atheism against the Jews? A really pious and ecclesiastically minded Christian, who is pious not merely out of *raison d'état*, cannot talk dismissively about the Semites.' He argues that being Christian necessarily means allowing

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that the 'Semitic spirit' and the 'Germanic spirit' are mutually compatible; after all, the 'Germanic spirit' is not anymore the spirit of Arminius but has 'organically assimilated' (Semitic) Christianity. Joël denies that there is a general tendency in modern Jewish literature to dismiss Christianity. On the other hand, however, '(i)n the most noble books by Christian scholars (...) one will find the most dismissive comments whenever Jews and Judaism are the issues.' Joël argues that it is only natural that sometimes anger is also expressed on the side of the Jews: 'What function does Jewry have other than serving as a foil? (Wozu ist denn das Judentum da, wenn nicht, um als Folie zu dienen?) (...) You are preaching us tolerance? Is this not mockery? (Sie predigen uns Toleranz? Ist das nicht ein Hohn?)' (ibid.:24f).

Treitschke (1896a:25) adds that he finds any critique of Christian religious affairs from the part of Jews particularly inappropriate and a 'busy-body' intervention in what should be none of their business. Against this claim, Meyer points out that even the ultra-montanist press has acknowledged that Jews in official positions – Lasker is being mentioned as an example – have always remained neutral in Christian religious affairs, such as in the consultations on the legislation concerning Catholic cult (Meyer 1880b:8f).

### 2.2.7 The nationality of the German Jews

In his reply to Treitschke's first article, *Manuel Joël* stated sarcastically that he found himself 'sympathetically touched' by Treitschke's observation that 'the nation underwent a deep soul-searching' and 'without mercy pronounced judgement on itself'. However, 'the nation', according to Treitschke, located the evil only in the Jews, 'making them a scapegoat'. Instead of judging itself harshly, 'the nation' only judges 'a small fraction of the nation and at that one whose belonging to the German nation Treitschke even wants to deny' (Joël 1965:13). This process, writes Joël, can hardly be described as *self*-criticism of the nation because the 'self'-criticism constitutes the criticized part of the 'self' as 'not-self'.

Joël adds that the Jews are

a nationality that was defeated almost 2000 years ago [...] whose descendants nationally belong to the most diverse peoples and show the most diverse languages and customs (Sitten), who do not have anything in common but the same religion and who are meant to be marked (bezeichnet) and preserved (bewahrt) by force as a separate body (Sonderkörper), abscesses in the national organism through such [i.e. such as Treitschke's] 'just and moderate' assessments of their 'undeniable weaknesses' (ibid.:15).

Joël's comment pinpoints Treitschke's ambivalence about the nationality of the German Jews: they are accused of fancying themselves wrongly as non-Germans when they actually ought to feel German like their fellow-compatriots, while at the same time they are also accused of dressing up as Germans when they are actually aliens.

*Treitschke's* second contribution (Treitschke 1896b) is almost exclusively concerned with the issue of the German Jews' nationality. Treitschke targets especially Heinrich Graetz

because reflecting on the thoughts of this writer will give me the welcome opportunity of showing to the readers with utmost determinacy what this debate is essentially about (um was es sich in diesem Streit eigentlich handelt) (Treitschke 1896b:30).

Treitschke implies clearly that the *Streit* is 'essentially' about nationality.

The long section on Graetz begins with a confession of methodological relativism (or rather ‘cultural insiderism’)<sup>518</sup>: you have to *belong* to a ‘great people’ in order to understand it,<sup>519</sup> only Jews can understand Jews, and only Germans can understand Germans. Treitschke does not want to challenge what Graetz has to say about *Jewish* history – German history, however, falls outside Graetz’s proper domain. Graetz’s misjudgements of German issues cannot surprise Treitschke who concedes that some of Graetz’s bitterness and injustice is ‘understandable’ (ibid.) since he has to deal with ‘so much sadness’ in his *History of the Jews*.

However, Treitschke continues:

We are allowed to demand two things from him: his polemics against the religion of the overwhelming majority of his German compatriots should not completely overstep the limits of moderation, and he should speak with some respect and reserve of the people whose mild legislation protects him.

This formulation betrays the ambivalence that is fundamental to Treitschke’s argument. On the one hand, he demands that Graetz show ‘moderation’ when talking about the religion of his ‘German compatriots’ – implying that the demand for moderation follows from Graetz being a fellow-citizen himself. On the other hand, he demands that he show ‘respect’ for those same ‘compatriots’ who ‘protect’ him with ‘mild legislation’. If the Jews were full citizens or ‘compatriots’ they would not need to be ‘protected’ with ‘mild legislation’.<sup>520</sup>

Treitschke argues that Graetz does not meet ‘these modest demands’. He quotes Graetz dismissing Christian influences on Jewish religious life (such as the impact of Schleiermacher’s writings; ibid.:41)<sup>521</sup> as well as e.g. the liberal politician, Gabriel Riesser:

<sup>518</sup> A phrase used by Werner Sollors in ‘Beyond Ethnicity’ (1986), quoted by Paul Gilroy (1995:3).

<sup>519</sup> Treitschke makes here a back-handed acknowledgement of Graetz’s approach as a historian: ‘Because every great people (Volk) can only be justly evaluated out of its own essence (aus seinem eigenen Wesen heraus), a historian who looks at German things from a specifically Jewish perspective must inevitably perceive some things oddly and one-sidedly’ (ibid.:39). This seems to imply that the not so ‘great’ peoples can also be understood by outsiders.

<sup>520</sup> The formulation that gives away the mischievous intent is ‘mild legislation’ which can only refer to specific legislation that protects the Jews from being discriminated against; Treitschke is not talking about solidarity between equal citizens.

<sup>521</sup> Treitschke takes particular offence at Graetz’s (actually quite perceptive) comment that Friedrich Schlegel’s novel ‘Lucinde’ is a sibling (‘Zwillingschrift’) of Schleiermacher’s ‘Speeches on Religion’ (both 1799). While the Protestant Treitschke unsurprisingly holds Schleiermacher’s theology in highest esteem (in contrast to Graetz who is conservative in

Herr Graetz freely admits that he does not regard Germany as his fatherland; he portrays the excellent (trefflichen) Gabriel Riesser as the peculiar example of a Jew who 'completely merged into his fortuitous place of birth (in seinem zufälligen Geburtslande vollständig aufging)' (ibid.:41f).

Treitschke claims he did not object to Graetz 'admonishing his tribal fellows to "take pride in their ancestry"' but accuses him of not granting the Germans the same right. He expresses his disagreement with Graetz's claim that the greatest German poet was Lessing and disagrees even more when Graetz continues that 'Börne was more than Lessing'.<sup>522</sup>

Treitschke takes issue in particular with the following formulation by Graetz:<sup>523</sup>

The recognition of the Jews as full members [of society] is already widely accomplished; the recognition of Judaism (Anerkennung des Judenthums), however, is still heavily disputed (ibid.:44).

Graetz's formulation 'Anerkennung des Judenthums' could be understood in different ways. Treitschke claims that 'Judaism as religious community has long been recognized' and concludes that Graetz can only refer to the recognition of Jewry '*as a nation* within and next to the German nation' (italics added). Since Treitschke's claim is factually not true, his conclusion is also not tenable. He (mis-)reads Graetz's demand for recognition as a *religious* community as a demand for *national* emancipation<sup>524</sup> which he strongly rejects:

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religious affairs), both authors agree on condemning 'Lucinde' as the lowest piece of writing they can think of: *Lucinde* was the most radical expression of early Romanticism's attack on traditional morality and gender conceptions, as Schleiermacher revolutionized the Protestant discourse on religion.

<sup>522</sup> Treitschke writes: 'So we have the pleasure of admiring in Börne the very greatest son of German soil, but we are immediately interrupted in this pleasure when the author expressly declares that Börne was not at all a German but a Jew' (ibid.:43). Graetz replied that his remark that 'Börne was more than Lessing' meant that Börne contributed more to (national) liberation (Graetz 1965b:51).

<sup>523</sup> This is the last sentence of the last chapter in volume eleven (Graetz 1870:582). Graetz discusses here the popular movements in February and March 1848 that he writes regularly demanded the emancipation of the Jews. The last two sentences are: 'Die Freiheit ist für sie [die Juden] errungen, sie selbst scheinen als Wächter derselben eingesetzt; die Erringung der Gleichheit und Brüderlichkeit steht noch bevor. Die Anerkennung der Juden als vollberechtigte Glieder ist bereits so ziemlich durchgedrungen; die Anerkennung des Judenthums aber unterliegt noch schweren Kämpfen.'

<sup>524</sup> Meyer rejects Treitschke's interpretation of Graetz's remark that 'Judenthum' still remains officially to be recognized (ibid.:32-3). He points out that there has only been a petition to accept the 'Day of Atonement' (Versöhnungstag) as a public holiday, which the Imperial Chancellor has rejected (not to speak of the Sabbath). Judaism as a religious cult (Cultus) is formally

To such a claim every German who holds his Christianity and his ethnicity (*Volksthum*) holy cannot but respond instantly: *never!* Our state has never seen in the Jews anything but a religious community and under no circumstances can give up this legal concept – the only one tenable (*ibid.*:44f; italics in the original).

Treitschke makes here three points:

- *one*, the Jews are not a nationality but merely a religious group;
- *two*, Germans who hold their Christianity and *Volksthum* ‘holy’ (which is by implication what they ought to do) can not accept the claim of a group of fellow-citizens for recognition as a distinct nationality;
- *three*, neither can ‘our state’.

Since the Germans and the ‘we’ that constitute ‘our state’ are the same people, the German people simultaneously hold their Christianity and *Volksthum* ‘holy’ and form a (liberal, bourgeois) state that does recognize religious minorities but not national minorities. By the look of this argument, the only problem with the Jews seems to be that some of them (Graetz and his readership) allegedly claim that Jewry constituted a separate nationality:

Our old culture is rich and tolerant enough to bear many strong contradictions: the followers of that church that thinks of itself as the only one that guarantees salvation (*die allein seligmachende*) live together peacefully with heretics, and so we can accept with equanimity that some of our fellow citizens silently consider themselves the chosen people. If however this racial arrogance (*Rassenduenkel*) steps out onto the marketplace, if Jewry even claims recognition for its nationality, then the

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recognized only in Alsace-Lorraine, Bavaria, Baden, Wuerttemberg, Hessen and Nassau but not in Prussia. In Prussia only the local communities (*Synagogengemeinden*) but not the religious community as a whole (*Religionsgenossenschaft*) are recognized – to the effect that Jewish priests, teachers, etc. do not share the privileges in taxation and public protocol that their Christian colleagues enjoy. Meyer argues that this is what Graetz was referring to, while nobody ever demanded recognition of a Jewish nationality.

Graetz himself rejects too Treitschke’s interpretation of his claim that the ‘recognition of *Judenthum*’ (Jewry or Judaism) is still to be gained: ‘Every impartial reader reads in this that Jewish religion or doctrine is not yet recognized, that Judaism is not recognized as a religion or confession, that Jewish clergymen (*Geistliche*) here and there are not on an equal footing with Christian ones. You however insinuate that I was talking about *Jewish nationality*, as *if I wanted Jewish nationality to be recognized*. But is Jewry/Judaism (*Judenthum*) identical with [*Jewish nationality*]?’ (Graetz 1965b:51; italics in the original). Graetz denies the ambivalence that might be found in his formulation ‘recognition of *Judenthum*’ and claims that Treitschke’s interpretation is ‘malicious’. Treitschke’s interpretation of the particular quote is indeed at least one-sided, and Treitschke might have misinterpreted it wilfully. On the other hand, there are ‘proto-nationalist’ tendencies in Graetz’s writing that seem to be contradicting his claim to ‘German patriotism’. Perhaps against Graetz’s intentions and unawares, there is a contradiction in his argument that Treitschke knew how to exploit.

legal ground (Rechtsboden) on which emancipation is founded collapses (ibid.:45).

Although Treitschke had previously argued (cp. chapter 2.2.2) that German national culture is young and not yet self-conscious enough to afford the luxuries of the liberal mind, in this sequence he seems confident enough to grant a free reign to the marginal peculiarities of Catholicism, assorted heretics and Jews – as long as these oddities take place ‘silently’. However, should the ‘racial arrogance’ of the Jewish minority insist on coming out of the closet, Treitschke recommends ‘emigration and foundation of a Jewish state’ somewhere else, which could then search for national recognition: ‘On German soil there is no space for a double nationality’.<sup>525</sup>

Treitschke concludes:

I ask now: can a man who thinks and writes like that be considered a German himself? No, Herr Graetz is a stranger (Fremdling) on the soil of his ‘accidental place of birth’, an Oriental who does not understand or wish to understand our people (ibid.:43f).

Treitschke turns the formulation that Graetz made with reference to Gabriel Riesser against Graetz himself to the effect of his virtual disenfranchisement. Taking advantage of an ambivalence in Graetz’s argument between the democratic demand for emancipation without enforced assimilation and intimations of a ‘proto-Zionist’ nationalism, Treitschke portrays Graetz one-sidedly as a Jewish nationalist and anti-German, anti-Christian separatist who would claim ‘Germanness’ for himself only for tactical advantage. Treitschke suggests that Graetz attempted to

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<sup>525</sup> Treitschke adds that ‘until the most recent past the Jews did not participate in the millennial effort of German state-formation’. Nor did they contribute to the formation of German culture in any significant way: ‘At the time they started to have significance in state and literature’ of Germany, they found ‘the foundations of Germanic culture (Gesittung)’ ready made and had to assimilate individually in order to achieve something. While many did so, ‘Herr Graetz and his kind move into other directions’ (ibid.:46). Treitschke adds here a third motive, that of historical merit: the Jews did not contribute significantly enough, so they do not deserve to be recognized as a second nationality on the same ‘soil’. This seems to imply that early involvement in the building of the national state would have earned them recognition. Treitschke concludes: ‘However, our public opinion is finally beginning to be watchful. In only a few years to come, it will be strengthened enough so that derogatory speeches about the ‘ancient Germanic rabble (germanischen Ur-mob)’, as they can be found now in the Jewish press, will be as inconceivable in Germany as they already have been in England for a long time’ (ibid.).

prove with continuous spiteful invective that the nation of Kant was really educated to humanity only by the Jews, that the language of Lessing and Goethe became sensitive to beauty, spirit and wit only through Börne and Heine (1896a:24).

Graetz replies that Treitschke quoted his writings out of context and selectively. He points out that he spoke more favourably of the beginnings of Christianity than even Reimarus, Goethe, Strauss or Renan ever did (Graetz 1965b:48).<sup>526</sup>

Treitschke's claim that his portrayal of Graetz was representative of the spirit of the German Jews (when it was hardly even representative of Graetz himself) was rejected unequivocally by those German Jews who replied to his intervention. A formulation by *Lazarus* makes the essential point:

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<sup>526</sup> Graetz argues that when he said that many converted Jews 'joined the enemy camp' he was referring not to Christianity but to the camp of Jew-haters (ibid.:49).

Graetz defends his deriding the German nation by pointing out that the eleventh volume of his work had been written before 1868: 'The glorious victories, the unity that was accomplished through ingenious leadership and Germany's ascendancy took place after that date' (ibid.). Having made this compliment in Bismarck's direction, Graetz asserts that for the English translation that was currently in the process of being published he cut his earlier condescending remarks on the German nation 'which had been true before 1870, but became untrue after that date' (Graetz 1965b:50). He stresses that his presentation of the relation between Christianity and Jewry in his 'History of the Jews' represents a balanced account and is actually sympathetic to early Christianity, if less so to its later development (ibid.:28). He refutes Treitschke's indictment of a 'deadly hate' (Todhass) in his writings against 'the most pure and powerful representatives of German being (Wesen)' and asserts that he merely argued that one could have expected 'a powerful assertion of humanity' with respect to the Jews from 'two men of the first rank' like Goethe and Fichte. However, both made anti-Jewish remarks.

Philippson who had been on the editorial board of the publishing house that had published the first ten volumes of Graetz's *History* points out (AZ 13.1.1880, No 2) that the eleventh volume had been rejected by the (liberal) publisher who did not want to take responsibility for Graetz's style and was particularly critical of Graetz's rejection of religious reform. Philippson stresses that the decision was taken because the book should not be published in a place that could be seen as representative of German Jewry (ibid.:21) and adds that large sale numbers do not necessarily mean that all buyers agree with everything the author writes. Philippson concludes that 'both Treitschke and Graetz are partisan and romantic historians (als Geschichtsforscher Parteigänger und Romantiker), keen on having particular views and tending towards speculation (zu Hypothesen geneigt).' Philippson sees their dispute as a personal affair that is of no relevance to the Jews in general. In a supplement to the AZ 10.2.1880, No 6 a very angry letter by Graetz can be found followed by a response which reasserts that Graetz is 'unable to understand the modern times'. The author of the response indicates that the conflict with Graetz was about the 'unification of Judaism (Judenthum) with the life of nation and state, [which means] the sincere entry [of the Jews] into the life of culture' (page 2 of the supplement).

Joël cautiously defended Graetz (he remained the only contributor to the debate to do so) (Joël 1965:24): 'Graetz has the wrongs of his virtues'; it is only passion for his subject that leads him to the occasional overstatement. In his comment on Treitschke's reply to Graetz, *Naudh* claims sarcastically that he has to 'acknowledge' that Graetz's text helped Treitschke clarify his views (Naudh 1965:199).



Gentlemen, we are Germans, nothing but Germans. When talking about the concept of nationality, we belong to only one nation, the German one (Lazarus 1880:18).

Similarly, *Seligmann Meyer* holds that the Jews cannot become Germans because they are Germans anyway. He mentions the Jews' achievements and contributions to German national history and adds that the Germanic tribes migrated from 'the East' just like the Jews did. He rejects Treitschke's claim that Graetz 'hated' Christianity, adding, however, that the Jews were not responsible for Graetz anyway (Meyer 1880a:10). *Oppenheim* calls Graetz an

indiscreet and zealously one-sided man (taktlosen und zelotisch einseitigen Manne), the benefit of whose great scholarship is spoiled (um ihren ganzen Segen gebracht) by the absurdity of his conclusions.

However, this is not a problem of the Jews:

The Jews are as little responsible for Herrn Graetz as the kingdom of Saxony for the confusions of Herrn von Treitschke.

*Ludwig Bamberger* also remarks that Treitschke's implicit claim that the German Jews are not 'good German patriots' is supported merely by 'some formulations by Graetz' (Bamberger 1965:153).<sup>527</sup>

With reference to Treitschke's article, *Lazarus* states that 'basically we [German Jews] should keep silent'<sup>528</sup> and just wait until 'what is called once more the Jewish question' has run out of steam (Lazarus 1880:5). 'For us as Jews' there is no such thing as a 'Jewish question' but merely a 'German question', namely the problem of the Germans achieving the humanity that consists in granting humanity to others. For 'the Jews as Jews' there is nothing to

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<sup>527</sup> Bamberger writes: 'Does strict historical method (...) allow the apodictic characterizing of the basic structure of the general state of things with reference to a single peculiar phenomenon [i.e. Graetz's writings]?' (ibid.).

<sup>528</sup> Topic and purpose of the speech reflect the circumstances in which it was given: as Lazarus mentions at the beginning of the speech, the lecture was 'by invitation only' (Lazarus 1880:5). Because Lazarus intended to contribute to self-clarification amongst the Jews instead of 'entering the field of struggle', 'only Jews were invited'. Lazarus proposes self-clarification 'with the calm of scientific contemplation' (ibid.). He argues that the excitement 'which recently has again been directed against the Jewish religious community (Glaubensgenossenschaft)' is based on the assumption that they constitute a distinct group 'opposed to the whole of the population of the country', i.e. that the Jews constitute 'a nationality different from the German one'. For this reason, Lazarus concentrates in his contribution on the 'scholarly' (wissenschaftliche) discussion of the concept of 'the nation'. Lazarus uses 'Volk' and 'Nation' as synonyms.

do in this affair. However, 'we are Germans, [and] as Germans we have to talk'. 'On our cheek burns not the red of anger of the Jew but the red of shame of the German' (ibid.:6).

Lazarus asserts that the Jews of Germany are German in all the ways that he described in his contribution (cp. *chapter 2.2.5.4*) – language, country, state, culture, fate – except one: *descent* (ibid.:19). But the Germans do not share common descent anyway since many non-Jewish Germans are also of only partly Germanic descent. All groups that constitute today's Germans, including the Jews, have immigrated at some point earlier or later in history. The Jews came 'searching for a home (Heimat) and a home is what they found' (ibid.21). They have been united with the other groups through 'seven generations of (...) common fate'. Lazarus ends his speech on a particularly patriotic tone and a reference to the two attempts on the life of the *Kaiser* that had happened in 1878.<sup>529</sup>

Lazarus' speech shows a strong sense of Jewish identity – after all, it is dedicated to 'self-clarification' amongst Jews and was first given to a Jewish audience. Nevertheless, it also strongly emphasizes the German nationality of the German Jews. *Hermann Cohen* articulates – stronger than Lazarus – his reluctance to accept the fact of being addressed and being obliged to reply *as a Jew*: those replying to Treitschke tend to feel strongly and painfully the fact that *responding as a Jew* means giving recognition to the *appellation as a Jew*. Cohen writes: 'So after all, we arrived again at the point of having to confess [to being Jewish]', which is the wording of the first sentence of his response to Treitschke and Lazarus. Cohen stresses that he would have preferred not 'having to confess' (Cohen 1965:124).<sup>530</sup>

Echoing Treitschke, Cohen refers to the historical experience of a specific generation. As Treitschke invoked the generation that had fought for national

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<sup>529</sup> 'Today we are not lacking the art of the prophetic word but its bloodcurdling power. If as monstrous a deed of moral degradation (Verwilderung) as the attempts on the most honorable head of the nation (auf das ehrwuerdigste Haupt der Nation) would have happened back then [in the times of the prophets], sounds of enormous power would have arisen, whose ringing we would still be hearing today like we still today hear the penetrating call of Jeremiah and Isaiah. Perhaps somewhere in a German mind (Gemuehte) a spark of that ardour might still be glowing under the ashes of the centuries; it might light up – even if less bright – and illuminate for us the path of justice and clemency and be to the benefit (Segen) of the whole German people: may God bring that to pass!' (ibid.:57f)

<sup>530</sup> He writes he feels obliged on two levels: on a general (patriotic) and a personal (professional, academic) level.

unification, Cohen invokes those who had fought for emancipation and assimilation. 'We, the younger generation (Wir Jüngeren)' had been allowed to hope to be able to assimilate into 'the nation of Kant' ('in die "Nation Kants" uns einzuleben'). There had been hope that 'moral politics (sittliche Politik)' and 'historical understanding (historische Besinnung)' would level out differences and would allow German Jews to express their 'patriotic love' and their pride to contribute to the nation's tasks without second thoughts ('mit unbefangenen Ausdruck') (Cohen 1965:124). This hope has now been shattered because 'one of the leaders of the national party' has chosen 'to raise the race issue against us'. Cohen underlines that this attack did not come from 'forces inimical to civilization' (kulturfeindlichen Kreisen) but from a man 'to whom we, the younger generation (wir Jüngeren), owe so much in understanding and inspiration' (ibid.:125). Cohen's argument underlines how closely national unification and Jewish emancipation/assimilation had been felt to be the same process, which is reflected in reverse in the particular weight carried by a *nationalist* attack on emancipation. Without using the word, Cohen implies that Treitschke is guilty of treason.

Cohen adds several very polemical remarks on Graetz, whose student he had been (ibid.:140) and whom he associates with 'the Palestine faction' (die Partei der Palästinenser)<sup>531</sup> (ibid.:139). He reproaches Graetz for a 'perversity of moral judgement' and asserts that 'there is nothing sound (nichts Gesundes)' in the direction he saw Graetz going (ibid.:140). Cohen warns about 'being only excited and touched by Jewish tribal issues' and ignoring the 'pride and dignity of the German spirit'. Significantly, Cohen asserts that 'the same fallacy' underlies also Lazarus' position, although the latter is formulated more abstractly.

*Philippon* agrees with Cohen that the Jews 'should become more German' but reproaches Cohen for directing this demand only at the Jews. The Christian Germans also have to become more German (AZ 9.3.1880, No 10:148f); alluding to ultra-montanism, he asks rhetorically:

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<sup>531</sup> This seems to be a word for what would now be called 'proto-Zionists'.

Does not a large part of the Germans adhere to religious convictions that put the church higher than the nation, in particular a church that has its gravitational point beyond the mountains?

Further, many Germans still swear by their being Saxonian, Bavarian or Austrian. In their professions, though, Christians and Jews follow the same ends and tendencies irrespective of their different religions.<sup>532</sup> He also reproaches Cohen for failing to say what the Jews should do in order to become more German.

Apart from Joël's, only one contribution refuses to engage in discussing whether or not the German Jews are German enough in the first place, that by *Oppenheim*. Oppenheim points to two contradictions in Treitschke's position. The first contradiction is that Treitschke accuses the Jews of threatening to destroy German culture while on the other hand writing that the 'hard German heads' (ibid.:18; cp. Treitschke 1896a:27) cannot become accustomed to alleged Jewish values. The second contradiction is that Treitschke accuses the Jews of not wanting hard enough to become German, while on the other hand accusing them of 'insisting on their certificate (Schein)', i.e. on emancipation. Oppenheim writes that 'either of these would be bad' but both accusations are 'fortunately wrong': the struggle for or defence of emancipation, assimilation to German culture and German national consciousness are three sides of the same process. Oppenheim points out that since emancipation the German Jews have become involved in all areas of the public sphere beyond their share in the population, and he suggests that Treitschke resents precisely their involvement and, by implication, their assimilation rather than their alleged separatism 'because Jews who swear on Treitschke's colours (Fahne) are rare indeed'. He thus suggests that Treitschke's concern is with the specific political convictions of the Jews, not any lack of Germanness.

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<sup>532</sup> Philippon had argued similarly in an immediate response to Treitschke's first article (*AZ* 9.12.1879, No 50). He stated that he agreed with Treitschke's demand that the Jews should become Germans, but added that this demand should apply to all Germans, not just the Jews. He points out that there still existed political parties 'in which the particularistic feeling outweighs the national (dem deutsch-nationalen noch voransteht)'. The Jews however tended not to belong to those parties. Even the Jews in Poland 'faithfully adhere to their German sovereign' although a stronger adherence to the Poles would give them advantages and stop their being mistreated by the latter.

### 2.2.8 The long-standing hatred of the Jews as evidence of their evil nature

One supporting piece of anti-Jewish evidence used by Treitschke is the longevity of anti-Jewish attitudes. Treitschke states that 'since the time that Tacitus complained about the *odium generis humani*' (Treitschke 1896a:28)<sup>533</sup> there has always been and there will always be 'an abyss between occidental and Semitic being (Wesen)', and some Jews will always be merely 'German-speaking Orientals'. Assimilation will never be complete. In this vein, he grants that, the Jews being 'a cosmopolitan power', 'a specifically Jewish education' has 'a historical right to existence'. The 'abyss' between West and East, however, needs to be 'mitigated' by a more moderate and tactful behavior on the side of the Jews.

Any claim about the 'eternal' character of an 'abyss' between Jews and non-Jews obviously stands and falls with the validity of references to authorities from past times. Therefore, several respondents found the Tacitus-quote worth discussing in some detail.<sup>534</sup> The question of what exactly Tacitus meant needs to be examined as well as how different authors used Tacitus's evidence.

Graetz and Cassel pointed out that Tacitus wrote that the Christians, not the Jews had been 'convicted of hate of the human species' (*odio humani generis convicti sunt*) under Nero (Graetz 1965a:27; Cassel 1880:24). Cassel suggests that Treitschke might have mixed up *Annales* 15.44 with the fifth book of *Historiae*<sup>535</sup> that has a much more clearly anti-Jewish tendency. Naudh (Naudh

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<sup>533</sup> Treitschke is here not quoting literally; see the exact quotation in the following.

<sup>534</sup> To the present day, historical reflections on whether there was 'anti-Semitism' in the Roman Empire or the European Enlightenment continue to carry considerable weight in the wider discussion. The *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* was not an exception in this.

<sup>535</sup> The first thirteen chapters of *Historiae*, book 5 deal with Judaea. The thrust of Tacitus' attitude here is clearly that the Jews have no 'religiones' (holy customs) but only the 'superstitio' that consists in the (for Tacitus) abstractly monotheistic belief ('Iudaei mente sola unumque numen intellegunt'). Tacitus opposes the Jews' 'mos absurdus sordidusque' (grotesque and ugly customs) to the 'festos laetosque ritus' (festive and happy rites) of a gentile local cult. He suggests that the Jews' purely spiritual ('mente sola') 'superstitio' produces an anti-social, anti-state and anti-patriotic mindset: this is the meaning of 'most disgusting' (*taeterrima gens, sordidus mos*) in this context. Tacitus interprets the Jewish religion thus as a *social institution* and evaluates it from the perspective of the necessities of the Imperial *state*. Although there is without doubt an element of continuity in anti-Jewish sentiments and reasoning from antiquity to the present, in particular insofar as the relation of the Jews to the state is concerned, the claim of an uninterrupted essential continuity is untenable. Anti-Jewish attitudes cannot have been continually the same because there have not been two continually existing unchanging parties – 'the Jews' as well as 'the non-Jews' (and their institutions such as the state or the church) – that could constitute such a relationship.

1965:181), who claims an uninterrupted continuity of ‘Jew-baiting’ (‘Judenhetze’, in quotes in the original) from *Exodus* through classical and medieval to modern times, also quotes a passage from *Historiae* (5,8) as evidence of Tacitus’ anti-Jewish attitude.<sup>536</sup>

In his response to Graetz, Treitschke reasserts his view that the very long history of anti-Jewish attitudes rules out the possibility of a ‘complete amalgamation of Jewry and the occidental peoples’ (Treitschke 1896b:36). He brings up the Tacitus-quote again and asserts that the Romans at the time saw the Christians as just another Jewish sect: the Christians were accused of ‘hate of the human species’ *as Jews*. Roman anti-Christianism represented nothing but a specific case of anti-Judaism.<sup>537</sup> Treitschke claims that ‘almost all writers of late antiquity’ (ibid.:37) agree in their ‘hatred of Jews’<sup>538</sup> and concludes:

Whoever has at least an elementary grasp of our discipline, must concede straight away: it is totally inconceivable that a struggle of two thousand years should know only cruelty, tyranny, greed on one side, on the other side only suffering innocence. The question cannot be denied: why did so many noble and highly gifted nations vent the base and – I do not avoid the word – diabolical drives slumbering in the depths of their souls exclusively on the Jewish people? The answer is simple. Since its dispersion over the whole of the world, Jewry existed in an unresolvable inner contradiction; it suffered the tragic fate of a nation without state. The Jews always wanted to live under the protection of Occidental laws, take advantage of the busyness of the Occident and yet claim to be a strictly separate (abgesonderte) nation. Such an attitude always had to provoke new struggles because it stands in such fierce contradiction to the hard necessity of the unity of the state (zu der harten Notwendigkeit der Staatseinheit) (ibid.:37f).

<sup>536</sup> Naudh quotes Tacitus calling the Jews a ‘detrerrima gens’. Actually the text reads ‘taetrerrima gens’, a ‘most disgusting people’ (‘detrerrima’ is not a Latin word).

<sup>537</sup> Treitschke refers to *Annales* 15:44, a notoriously difficult passage; it is impossible to assess this here as a problem in its own right. Tacitus refers to the ‘Chrestianos’; it is unclear whether this means ‘Christians’ because there seems to have been also another similarly sounding Jewish sect (followers of a Jew called Chrestos) at the time in Rome. My feeling is that Treitschke has a better reading of Tacitus – whoever the ‘Chrestianos’ were, there seems to be an anti-Jewish sentiment involved that is shared by Tacitus. The aristocratic republican Tacitus can be expected to dislike any religious sect that would separate itself from the official Roman imperial doctrine, something that would have been interpreted as ‘*odium generis humanae*’: a refusal to adapt to the ruling ideology – if it is ‘universalist’ like the *pax Romana* ideology was – would have been interpreted as directed against humanity. Neither the ‘ethnic’ background of the adherents of such cults nor the theological subtleties would have been relevant for Tacitus.

<sup>538</sup> As the alleged quintessence of anti-Jewish attitudes ‘throughout all of recent history (neuere Geschichte)’ Treitschke quotes a line by the Roman writer Juvenal stating that the Jews despise Roman law and ‘teach, follow and fear’ only Jewish law (Treitschke 1896b:38).

Treitschke states that 'cruelty, tyranny, greed' cannot be the sole motivations of a two thousand year long struggle: the 'other side' involved in this history cannot be innocent. Treitschke takes for granted, however, that there has been a continuous 'struggle' between two 'sides' whose identity through history has been uninterrupted. Treitschke presupposes 'occidental history' as one continuing historical process<sup>539</sup> whose main protagonist – 'the occidental peoples' – faces an eternally unchanging enemy, 'the Jews'.<sup>540</sup>

Treitschke does not merely state that hatred of the Jews has 'always been there' but also gives what he thinks is the reason: Jewry suffered for two thousand years 'the tragic fate of a nation without state', an account that seems taken from Treitschke's own historical experience.<sup>541</sup> Being a 'nation without state' the Jews had to preserve their distinctiveness in terms of religion and culture which had to bring them into 'fierce contradiction to the hard necessity of the unity of the state'. It is telling that Treitschke – who puts great emphasis on the Christian character of the German nation – sides with Tacitus – a representative of Roman Imperial *raison d'état* – against the persecuted Christians and excuses the Imperial point of view with the assumption the Romans might have seen just another Jewish sect in the Christians. Treitschke could not declare more explicitly whose side he is on and why: the decisive category is 'the hard necessity of the unity of the state'.

In his second reply, Graetz insisted that Tacitus referred exclusively to Christians not to Jews. He argues that in Nero's time, the Christians in Rome were 'almost exclusively gentile Christians', i.e. converted Greeks and Romans rather than from Jewish background (Graetz 1965b:47). Jews at the time were not generally 'unpopular (missliebzig)', while actually many (state-loyal) Romans practised Judaism which therefore was not an 'ethnic' but a religious category. Graetz concludes that Treitschke's 'drawing ethnographic conclusions from

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<sup>539</sup> This specifically 19<sup>th</sup> century idea of a temporal unity of a historical entity called 'Europe' or 'Occident' from the Greek city states to the present is what Samir Amin (1989) described as 'Eurocentrism'.

<sup>540</sup> If the Roman Imperial élite disliked the Jews then because of their significant success in making proselytes, i.e. because of their *not being* a static, limited 'ethnic group'.

<sup>541</sup> It is more than tempting to see in this analysis – perhaps the most sympathetic thing Treitschke ever has to say about the Jews – a projection from Treitschke's own account of the history of the German people.

(single) ill-disposed sentences by Roman writers is rather unhistorical' (ibid.:47).<sup>542</sup>

Cassel's reply follows a completely different strategy. He brushes aside the historiographical subtleties and argues that everything Tacitus held against the Jews was just as true of the Christians no matter what Tacitus actually intended to say. He argues that Jews and Christians find themselves on the same side opposed to the arrogance of the Imperialist aristocrat Tacitus and he suggests they should acknowledge that. He argues that 'thanks to God' the 'Semitism' of the apostle Paul has brought 'all the sins of the Orient to Rome' (a formulation borrowed sarcastically from Juvenal) (ibid.:26) so that 'the Jordan now flows into the Tiber'. While Treitschke identifies with Tacitus' invocation of Imperial *raison d'état*, Cassel suggests a Semitic/Christian alliance of Mosaic law and apostolic teachings against a 'pagan-modern frenzy of licentiousness (heidnisch-modernen Unzuchtstaumel)' – just the way things might have been in Tacitus' times.

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<sup>542</sup> Graetz's rebuke does, however, not quite get to the point that Treitschke was making. Treitschke had quoted Tacitus as evidence that writers in classical antiquity generally despised the Jews, which is part of his 'no smoke without fire' type of argument: because the Jews have been persecuted for such a long time, there must be a reason for it and therefore they should continue to be persecuted. However, while Graetz's response refers to how things really were, Treitschke's argument was on how Tacitus saw them. In the light of the further sources that Graetz is quoting, Josephus and Dio Cassius, it looks like Graetz is probably right on the historical facts, but Treitschke seems to be right on reading an anti-Jewish sentiment in Tacitus (although wrong on exactly what kind of anti-Jewish sentiment that was).



### 2.2.9 Emancipation, assimilation and the concept of rights

On several occasions, Treitschke rejects the idea of challenging the legal emancipation of the Jews in the German state. The principal formulation is the following (in the context of his response to Graetz, Treitschke 1896b:38):

Today the unfortunate struggle (unselige Kampf) is settled, civil equality (bürgerliche Gleichberechtigung) of the Jews has long been achieved in all civilized states (Culturstaaten), and in all of Germany I do not know one reasonable (verständigen) politician who would want to overthrow this accomplished deed. The German Jews enjoy unrestricted freedom of worship; nobody interferes with their old customs and traditions nor with their distinct cosmopolitan scholarship (eigenthümlichen kosmopolitischen Wissenschaft); civic life (der bürgerliche Verkehr) even widely respects their Sabbath although this is undeniably for us Christians a very inconvenient institution. With emancipation achieved, however, the old Jewish claim to separate nationhood has also become totally obsolete. In the present century of national state formations, the European Jews can have a role that is peaceful and conducive to morality (der Gesittung förderliche) only if they decide to dissolve into (aufzugehen in) the civilized peoples (Culturvölkern), whose languages they speak – as far as religion, tradition and tribal characteristics (Stammesart) allow this to happen.

In this crucial paragraph, Treitschke makes four distinct statements:

- All *Culturstaaten* have granted 'civil equality'. Since by implication this is part of what makes them 'civilized', one ought not attempt to challenge this.
- Although the fact that the Jews enjoy the same civil equality as other groups seems in principle to be grounded in universalist liberal values, Treitschke still mentions some of what seem to him particular characteristics of the Jews: Treitschke mentions that the Jews continue to stick to their 'peculiar cosmopolitan scholarship' and to the Sabbath which is for 'us Christians' very 'inconvenient'. The fact that Treitschke finds it necessary to mention these things in the context of his adherence to universal liberal rights underlines that these rights do not go without saying: the universality of civic rights includes *even* Jews – despite their 'peculiar' and 'inconvenient' characteristics.
- 'With emancipation achieved', Jews have traded in and forsaken the right to make claims to separate nationhood. Treitschke demands '*aufzugehen*' in the '*Culturvölker*' as the only option for the Jews now that they have accepted

the terms of trade of emancipation. By implication, everything short of an active policy of dissolving Jewish separate identity counts as Jewish nationalism.<sup>543</sup>

- Nevertheless, there is a limit to the degree to which the Jews can have a positive role in modern European history (which is characterized as a history of nation-state building): the limit is their *ability* to assimilate. Their culture as well as '*Stammesart*' does not allow for complete assimilation, and thus by implication neither for a completely positive role in modern history. A residue of ethnic characteristics will remain unassimilable and alien to the world of modern European nation-states.

Treitschke's position on this issue is deeply ambivalent. First, he claims that 'the unfortunate struggle' – namely the conflict between 'the hard necessity of the state's unity' and the Jews' claim to both equality and difference – 'has been settled' with the achievement of legal emancipation. However, the remainder of the paragraph implies that struggle and conflict continue. The exhortative (and also discretely threatening) tone of Treitschke's discourse in these sentences clearly has a 'pragmatic' dimension: urging the Jews to make 'a decision'. The case that Treitschke claims has been 'settled' is actually not settled at all.

Treitschke's ostensible defence of (legal) emancipation is contradicted by his pointing to the insurmountable limits of assimilation due to 'religion, tradition

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<sup>543</sup> It is in this context that Treitschke attacks Heinrich Graetz as a representative of those who maintain an anachronistic claim to separate Jewish nationhood (cp. chapter 2.2.7). Treitschke writes later in the same text: 'Our state ... has granted them [the Jews] civil equality only in the expectation that they will make an effort to assimilate to their fellow citizens (dass sie sich bestreben wuerden, ihren Mitbuergern gleich zu sein)' (1896b:44f). Also on two later occasions in the *Streit* Treitschke rearticulates his understanding of the issue of emancipation in similar terms. In a 'response to a students' solidarity address (Huldigung)' (from November 19, 1880), Treitschke states that for him Jewish emancipation 'was indeed grounded in the nature of the modern state. But the difficult process does not end with formal emancipation: the point is that the Jews become Germans *inwardly, too* (dass die Juden auch innerlich Deutsche werden)' (Treitschke 1896f:120; italics added).

In a response to Mommsen (Treitschke 1896g:123-125; dated November 19, 1880 [the same day that Mommsen's letter in the *Nationalzeitung* appeared] but published on the 21<sup>st</sup>), Treitschke rebuts the accusation of holding anti-Jewish attitudes: 'The core of my considerations on the Jewish question consisted in the sentence: 'what we have to expect from our Jewish fellow citizens is simply: they should become Germans and feel simply and straightforwardly German'. I do not share the pessimistic opinion of my colleague Mommsen that everywhere in the world 'Jewry constitutes an effective ferment of cosmopolitanism and national decomposition' (Roman History III:550). Rather, I hope that in the course of the years, emancipation will be followed by inner amalgamation and reconciliation.' In this letter Treitschke presents himself as standing firmly in the liberal tradition of emancipation.

and tribal characteristics (Stammesart)'. If assimilation cannot be complete, neither can equality. Treitschke's claim that the struggle is over is part of the struggle that is far from over. In Treitschke's view, emancipation has been granted to the Jews as an advance instalment – thanks to the self-forgetful tolerance of the 'Culturvoelker' – while the Jews still have to deliver their part. They still have to decide to 'dissolve into' the latter, as far as it is possible for the alien 'tribe' that they are. Treitschke admits that 'a part of the German Jews has long taken this necessary decision' to assimilate, but he claims that another 'very influential part of our Jewry' has no such intentions.

It was left to Treitschke's interlocutors, however, to spell out in more theoretical language what concepts underpinned the controversy about the meaning and implications of Jewish emancipation. *Manuel Joël* comments on Treitschke's formulation, 'the moment emancipation was gained the Jews insisted boldly on their "certificate"' (Joël 1965:23; Treitschke 1896a:26).<sup>544</sup> Playing on the double meaning of 'Schein' (certificate, document/ appearance, illusion), Joël rebukes: 'So the certificate [of legal emancipation] was meant to remain an illusion ?' Joël argues that this peculiar formulation throws light on Treitschke's understanding of legal emancipation: emancipation is received in the form of a certificate the use of which one can insist on more or less 'boldly'. Exchange etiquette<sup>545</sup> as Treitschke seems to understand it demands the Jews not to make *too much* use of their right, which led Joël to making the pun on the double meaning of *Schein*: a certificate that one is expected to use only discreetly or partially is not actually worth its nominal value – this form of emancipation is illusionary.

Joël remarks sarcastically that human rights cannot be 'granted' (geschenkt) to the Jew because 'the Jew is anyway some kind of a human being (der Jude ist

<sup>544</sup> 'Kaum war die Emancipation errungen, so bestand man dreist auf seinem "Schein".'

<sup>545</sup> The exchange character of emancipation is implied in the notion that one receives a 'Schein' on whose cashing in one has to insist. Nadyr (1879:26) points out that Treitschke alludes in this formulation to Shakespeare's character Shylock. He writes that in his 'The Merchant of Venice' Shakespeare turned Paulo Maria Secchi (the merchant in the source used by Shakespeare) into the Jew Shylock in order to demonstrate the effects of denying the nobility of human beings. He emphasizes that Shakespeare had no anti-Jewish intention. Graetz quotes Gregorio Leti's 'Vita de Sixto Quinto' that gives as origin of the Shylock myth an anecdote from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in which a Christian demands a pound of flesh from a Jew after winning a bet (Graetz 1965b:49). In another pamphlet Graetz pointed out that the original theme of the Shylock myth did not contain any opposition of Jewish and Christian ethics at all. Its early literary manifestations seem to be

sozusagen auch ein Mensch)' (Joël 1965:25). This implies the rejection of a notion of rights as something subject to any form of trading or dealing. This issue was further elaborated by Philippson, Cohen and (mock-) 'Börne'.

Philippson writes that 'all those who currently act as enemies of the Jews intend to withdraw (wieder aufheben) emancipation (Gleichberechtigung)' (AZ 12.10.1880, No. 41:641). If some of them (such as Treitschke) claim not to have such an intention they contradict their own argument. 'Those who try to keep themselves covered (welche mit der Sprache so weit nicht heraus wollen)' resort to the tactic of claiming that emancipation (Gleichberechtigung) is not actually a (universal) right (Recht) and that the state had the liberty to grant, or not to grant, civil and political rights. They portray emancipation as a gift given as an act of tolerance. Philippson states that Treitschke was the first to put forward this argument and quotes a pamphlet by a person called Brake as a more recent publication that translates or explicates what had been merely implicit in Treitschke's argument. Brake writes:

The granting of civil rights (Bürgerrecht) and religious freedom (Cultusfreiheit) to the Jews has certainly not been the self-evident (selbstverständliche) acknowledgement of their natural and human rights but merely a declaration of the positive will of the state in a specific case. Therefore the state has also not renounced (verzichtet auf) its inalienable sovereign right (Hoheitsrecht) in every single case to decide anew and on its own about the admission of any new religious community and its compatibility with the state's general purposes and the overall culture of its subjects (Unterthanen) as they exist (quoted *ibid.*:641).

On the face of it, Brake (and, as Philippson argues, likewise Treitschke) does not deny the existence of universal rights *tout court*, but claims that *Jewish* emancipation simply does not fall into this category. He argues that the state has granted emancipation to the Jews only because their religion is not too different from the Christian religion and because their number was (then) small enough as not to endanger 'the unity of the moral (sittlich) and religious foundations of our population'. Emancipation is based on these conditions. Brake concludes that the state has the duty both to consider itself to be Christian as long as the majority of its population is such, and to guarantee toleration to the Jewish minority.

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based on opposing the strictness of *Roman* law to the notion of mercy that is Mosaic as well as Christian (Graetz 1880).

Philippson holds against Brake that conditional emancipation means failure to acknowledge the concept of individual liberal rights at all and is as such dangerous and in opposition to the 'Rechtsstaat'. He admits that a state has a right to allow (or deny) religious freedom (Cultusfreiheit) and he further grants that it is debatable whether and when the state has the right to grant or not grant naturalisation to a person who was not born within the territory of that state (Fremdbürtiger). However, he holds that under no circumstances can a state deny civil and political rights to somebody born within the country to parents who were also born there. Further, the state has a duty not to allow religion to have any impact on a person's possession of rights:

Humanity has progressed. Human society has developed. Legal concepts (Rechtsbegriffe) have become clear (haben sich geklärt), and legality (Recht) has assumed a large and far-reaching power. However much the sophists tease their brains (klügeln), whatever the crooked lawyers (Rechtsverdreher) ruminate (spintisieren): what has generally been acknowledged as right (Recht) has to persist and will persist (ibid.:643).

It should be noted that Philippson describes civil rights in very specific terms (civil and political rights are automatically the property of everybody born within a specific *territory* by parents who also have been born there) but still declares these very specific *Rechtsbegriffe* as the irreversible expression of the evolution of the *progress of humanity*.

*Cohen* also asserts that the anti-Jewish campaign at least implicitly intends to withdraw legal emancipation:

If one 'deliberately' decides to grant emancipation, one is naïve to complain about the falling number of conversions. However, if one is already working towards the logical conclusion that emancipation should be reversed, one must not continue to complain that the Jews are not willing to become Germans (Cohen 1965:143).

Cohen takes issue with the political voluntarism implicit in Treitschke's formulation, that every state decides 'deliberately (nach seinem freien Ermessen)' about who has 'the right to participate in its leadership'. However, unlike Philippson he does not refer to 'natural and human right' (see above) in a strict sense. He argues that legislation is the 'emanation (Ausfluss) of the general

national morality (Gesittung)'. While the nation can expect the emancipated to show gratitude for emancipation, it does not have the right to *demand* gratitude:

[The state's] freedom of deliberation has its limits not in so called natural law (which is a rather vague concept) but in the respective nation's concept of the – moral law (Sittengesetz) (ibid.)

Cohen equates here 'general national morality (Gesittung)' with the 'nation's concept of the – moral law' (Sittengesetz; the dash as in the original), reconciling the Kantian positing of a universal *Sittengesetz* with a nationalist perspective, in which the particular view of the *Sittengesetz* taken by a nation is decisive.

Cohen suggests that making participation conditional on a particular positive confession will provoke 'lies and pretence'. Therefore 'sittliche' administration of the state has to be based on 'a religious ground that is independent from contested dogmas', i.e. on *Religion* rather than any particular *Glaubensarten*. In a typical Kantian move, Cohen asserts: 'it is through such moral insight (sittliche Einsicht) that the state's deliberation gains its freedom' (ibid.:144).<sup>546</sup>

A quite different perspective was taken by the anonymous author of a pamphlet who masqueraded (or rather, ironically pretended to masquerade) as Ludwig Börne<sup>547</sup> and elegantly adopted the latter's radical-liberal language. 'Börne' repeatedly points out that he has said it all fifty years ago, so that the continuity of the adopted identity is meant to indicate an identity of the debate across the different contexts: for 'Börne', the earlier 'Hep Hep' movement and the current anti-Jewish movement are from one cloth.

'Börne' bases his polemic – perhaps most straightforwardly among all respondents to Treitschke – on Enlightenment liberal thought. First, he ridicules the failure of Treitschke and his like to differentiate between feelings and rational considerations about state and society:

You do not love the Jews. It is bad for the Jews that even educated Germans are subject to the relentless government of their hearts. Even to be just, the German needs to love ('Börne' 1880:6).

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<sup>546</sup> Cohen adds that Treitschke's conception that excludes the Jewish *Glaubensart* is basically un-religious in the Kantian sense of *Religion*. This is also why Cohen does not want to appeal to Treitschke (whom he never actually names but refers to as 'the editor of the *Preussische Jahrbuecher*'): 'from the point of view of general religiosity no words can be found to express adequately the disgust (Entrüstung) at [Treitschke's] attitude (Gesinnung)' (ibid.:142f).

<sup>547</sup> Ludwig Börne had been born as Loeb Baruch 1786 and died 1837.

He suggests that Treitschke failed to emancipate himself (or rather, his reason) from the 'relentless government' of the heart, which is presented as a lack of education. 'Börne's' sarcastic remark that 'even to be just, the German needs to love' implies that issues of justice are (or should be for men of education) of a different categorial order from issues of love – a crucial distinction which allowed Enlightenment liberals not to like (let alone love) the Jews but still to argue (or even fight) for them to receive 'justice'.<sup>548</sup> By implication, Treitschke's emphatic and irrational rhetoric is un-political and as such not part of a modern, bourgeois liberal discourse.

'Börne' continues his line of argument with a simile:

The storm and the sun had an argument about who was more powerful. The storm tried to snatch away a coat from a wanderer – in vain; the more it blew the more the wanderer wrapped himself into the coat. The sun came out in its light and mildness – the wanderer took off the coat. The Jews are such wanderers, Rabbinism is such a coat, you are the storm – but the sun has started to shine! (ibid.:10)

The sun, obviously enough a symbol of the Enlightenment, 'has started to shine' and thus makes the old coat of Rabbinism (which might have been useful in the past, but not anymore in these modern times) anachronistic and superfluous. Significantly, the storm and the sun compete about reaching the same goal – snatching away the coat. The storm against which the coat is a defence does not reach this goal, while the sun does because it removes the actual reason for wearing a coat. The simile used by 'Börne' on the one hand makes the realistic and farsighted point that not authoritarian hostility but actual social and political improvement (sunshine instead of storm) will (or rather, would) almost casually and effortlessly overcome antiquated forms of consciousness (the old coat); on

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<sup>548</sup> 'Börne' hits here a remarkably contemporary problem. His sarcastic remark can also be applied to the rhetoric of present day 'anti-racism' that often exhorts us to 'like' and to be 'friends with' or even 'love' foreigners – evidence of a post-liberal lack of trust in the persuasive power of the discourse of human rights or legal equality and in stark contrast to Kantian ethics whose specific achievement it had been to search for ethical categories that are not dependent on the vagaries and precariousness of liking, loving and befriending (while *ipso facto* liberating the categories of love and friendship from the burden of having to be ethical). Unfortunately, the *ersatz*-rhetoric of post-liberal anti-racism never works: one can not be friends or in love with whole groups of the population (such as 'foreigners'). Liberal Enlightenment universalism that has not been transcended and critically preserved in an emancipatory sense must regress into naïve pre-political concepts.

the other hand, however, it displays some wishful thinking: 'the sun has started to shine!' (note the exclamation mark) was hardly the watchword of the day in 1879.

Taking up his previous argument that justice does not need to be based on love for the Jews, 'Börne' adds an attack on the 'world of commerce' and its lack of morality:

I do not have to defend the world of commerce. I profoundly hate its Jewishness (Judenthümlichkeit) – that manifestation of the demon of money, this heightened (aufgestiegene) fury of greed, this bodily devil of gold – whether it comes in Hebrew, Muslim or Christian shape.

He adds that even if the Jews are more successful in commerce than the Christians this merely means that they are more clever, not that they are responsible for the phenomenon as such (ibid.). 'Börne' seems to be taking up a current manner of speech in an ironic way in order to undermine its implicit claims: if the devilish 'fury of greed' comes in 'Hebrew, Muslim or Christian shape' and has not been initiated by Jews, it is of course not very 'Jewish' at all.

In the body of his pamphlet, 'Börne' discusses the concept of 'civil rights'. He rejects the notion that 'human rights and civil rights, as well as religious and political toleration' are so different from each other that 'one could have claims to the one while not to the other'. He argues that Treitschke uses this conceptual distinction as a secondary legitimization or a smokescreen for a dislike of Jews that is ultimately motivated by economic factors:

Basically you have always been a hater of the Jews, but intellectually you have made progress: now you try to justify your hostility. You do not hate the Jews because they deserve it (weil sie es verdienen); you hate them and then you try to prove as well as you can *that* they deserve it. And you hate them – because they *earn* (weil sie – *verdienen*) (italics in the original) (ibid.:13f).<sup>549</sup>

He argues that what Treitschke wants to offer as 'human rights' – i.e. human rights without civil rights – are merely 'animal rights', namely the right to physically reproduce:

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<sup>549</sup> This paragraph is taken from Börne's text 'Der ewige Jude' (1821); the original formulation is quoted in Claussen (1994:117).



Only civil rights (Bürgerrechte) are human rights (Menschenrechte): for man (Mensch) becomes man only in civil (bürgerliche) society. This is where he is born, and he is born a citizen (Bürger). This is the principle of England, France and any free state.<sup>550</sup>

‘Börne’ argues that a meaningful conception of ‘human rights’ must be embodied in ‘civil rights’. Ultimately, the two concepts are identical because ‘man’ only exists *in society*, i.e. *as a citizen*: ‘...denn der Mensch wird erst in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft zum Menschen’. ‘Man’ outside society would be an animal, and the ‘rights’ that such a creature could lay claim to would be not more than the ‘rights’ that animals have, i.e. strictly speaking no rights at all.<sup>551</sup>

In the next sentence, ‘Börne’ shifts his argument by stating that one becomes a citizen only when coming of age (mündig) – not when (literally) being born.<sup>552</sup> This seems to imply that for example minors – who are not citizens – are *eo facto* also not humans: one comes of age when the intellectual powers are ‘fully developed’, which is presumed to coincide with the bodily powers ‘appearing mature’. ‘Börne’ mocks the fact that the Jews are being denied citizenship ‘because nature had condemned them body and soul to eternal childhood’ (ibid.:14) and suggests sarcastically that immature Christians should also be treated as children and be denied citizenship. While for him, citizenship was the same as human rights, he accused Treitschke of reducing citizenship to membership in a civil corporation. He points out that in Treitschke’s

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<sup>550</sup> Also this formulation is taken from ‘Der Ewige Jude’ (1821); the original formulation is quoted in Sterling (1969:87).

<sup>551</sup> This argument that equates *Man* with *citizen* is a two-edged sword: on the one hand it is inclusivist as it claims that nobody who is born within the boundaries of society can be denied full membership of that society, i.e. nobody can be given human rights without civil rights being included in the package. On the other hand it is exclusivist as it implicitly denies the humanity of all human beings who – for whatever reason – are not actually members of ‘society’. This is particularly relevant in the colonialist context as the equation of *man* and *citizen* implies that of *bourgeois* society and *human* society: the ‘savages’ cannot be considered humans if *Man* becomes *Man* only in civil/bourgeois society. ‘At home’ it implies that categories of people who are for varying reasons not considered full citizens (strangers, women, children, propertyless, paupers, handicapped) lose also the safety-valve of the ‘human rights’. Bourgeois society created the distinction between human and civil rights not without reason; the concept of ‘human rights’ – as a promise, reminiscent of Catholic universalism – seems to make sense only in its specific difference to the rights of a citizen. (Hannah Arendt [1951] argued of course that the history of the refugee problem in the 20<sup>th</sup> century teaches that one tends to lose the human rights in the instance that one would need them, namely after losing the rights of the citizen).

<sup>552</sup> I understand that ‘Börne’ argues that one’s attaining civil rights (on reaching maturity) is one’s moment of ‘birth’ *as a citizen*, i.e. *as a Man*. His equating of human rights and civil rights leaves him with the contradiction that before actually attaining civil rights, human beings are ‘Men’ only in an incomplete sense. This is at the core of his sarcasm: by being excluded from full equal rights, the Jews are being treated as if they were permanent minors, i.e. not fully human beings.

understanding, only in death do all members of society become equal in their human and civil rights: 'the shroud is your toga [i.e. the sign of being a citizen], and you turn into social beings only in your graves'! (ibid.)<sup>553</sup> 'Börne' argues that the enemies of the Jews only adopted the language of religious toleration after they ceased caring about religion anyway; what they do care about is that 'Jewish haggling (Schacher) does not outperform Christian haggling': for 'Börne', economic competition is at the heart of anti-Jewish attitudes. The language of religious toleration, however, is compatible with, and ineffective against a more modern form of Jew-hatred that is no longer bound up with religious forms of consciousness.<sup>554</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> 'Das Leichentuch ist eure Toga, erst im Grabe bekommt ihr Gemeinwesen!'

<sup>554</sup> Nadyr similarly sees the anti-Jewish campaign as 'scapegoating' the Jews for the faults of a political system that produces economic downturn despite the monetary benefits from the military victory of 1871 (Nadyr 1879:11) He sees in Treitschke's professed fear that the 'trouser selling' Jewish youth are bound to dominate the commercial and public spheres in Germany the cause of his hatred of Jews: the fear that his descendants would fail to compete with the descendants of the Jews.

### 2.2.10 The riddle of Treitschke's intentions

ONE ASKS ONESELF: WHAT DOES HERR VON TREITSCHKE WANT?  
(JOËL 1965:25)

The preceding chapters have been predominantly about how Treitschke and his respondents used a number of crucial political, social and historical concepts in differing (or not so differing) ways. This final chapter of the text analysis looks at what seem to have been Treitschke's specific intentions. In the first section, I will analyze and compare those passages of Treitschke's text in which he makes explicit statements about what he wants to happen about the 'Jewish Question', or rather: what he wants readers to think he wants to happen. In the second section, I will discuss the detailed comments by Bresslau, Bamberger and Mommsen on the question 'what does Treitschke want'. Three aspects ought to be distinguished:

- intentions that are openly articulated as such in Treitschke's discourse;
- implications of the text which might or might not be intended by Treitschke; and
- wider implications of the argument or of the categories used by Treitschke (and the other contributors) that are implicated in the specific reality that these categories refer to: modern bourgeois society and the national state.

The second and especially the third kind of implications will be discussed further in *Part Three*.

#### 2.2.10.1 TREITSCHKE'S PERSPECTIVE

In the last section of his first contribution (Treitschke 1896a) Treitschke makes specific suggestions as to how the Jews should behave in the face of Germany's developing into a proper nation-state. He points towards examples such as 'Jewish societies against usury which silently do much good', the 'work of understanding Israelites who have recognized that their fellow-Jews (ihre Stammgenossen) must adjust to the customs and ideas of their Christian fellow-citizens' (to whom, as the implication goes, such things as 'usury' are completely alien) and concludes:

Much remains to be done in this direction. It is not possible to change the hard German heads into Jewish heads. The only way out therefore is for our Jewish fellow-citizens to make up their minds without reservation to be Germans, as many of them have done already long ago, to their advantage and ours (Treitschke 1896a:27).

Treitschke presupposes as self-evident that 'German heads' and 'Jewish heads' cannot co-exist next to each other and that the latter have to adapt to the former<sup>555</sup>. He sounds confident here that this process is under way and merely needs to be continued consistently.

Treitschke's tone changes slightly when he discusses the remaining obstacles: the Jews 'who talk so much about tolerance' should

become truly tolerant themselves and show some respect for the faith, the customs and the feelings of the German people which has long ago atoned for old injustice and given them human and civil rights.

The lack of this 'respect' on the side of 'a section of our commercial and literary Jewry' is the 'ultimate reason' for the present anger. This anger, Treitschke concludes, might not be 'a pleasant sight' but it is merely the accompaniment of 'boiling up new ideas' and thus finally not a bad thing:

May God grant that we come out of the ferment and unrest of these restless years with a stricter concept of the state and its obligations and with a more vigorous national consciousness.

The anti-Semitic movement is a *phenomenon* of the more general and 'essential' process of bringing about the maturing of Germany into a *modern nation state*, to which it is necessary but merely instrumental. This implies that anti-Semitism will disappear once this process is successfully completed.

In the concluding section of his third contribution (Treitschke 1896c),<sup>556</sup> Treitschke develops the one point in his original contribution that he claims has been 'strangely ignored' by all commentators although he had intended it to be the main issue: his (self-)criticism of the 'complicity (Mitschuld) of the Germans in the power of Jewry (des Judenthums)' (Treitschke 1896c:61):

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<sup>555</sup> cp. chapter 2.2.2.2

<sup>556</sup> Treitschke's response to Bresslau, Lazarus and Cassel

We have allowed ourselves to be misguided by the great words of tolerance and Enlightenment towards some mistaken decisions on schooling that now threaten to damage the Christian education of our youth (...). Tolerance is a wonderful thing but it presupposes that one already has a firm religious conviction oneself. (...) It is the duty of the state to take utmost care that our school pupils are not taught indifference towards religion under the cover of tolerance (ibid.:61f).

Since Treitschke sees toleration and legal emancipation as benevolence that the victorious party can afford to show only after a decisive and final victory, any doubts about the finality of the victory would be reason enough to call toleration and emancipation into question. Such doubts seem to be raised for Treitschke by the lack of religious enthusiasm on the side of 'our youth'. Treitschke's intention of 'German self-criticism' – as it had previously been expressed in the first sentence of the first essay – is shown here to be not just a phrase: it seems that Treitschke would be happy to 'grant' all liberal rights to the Jews ('a wonderful thing') were it not for a lack of 'firm religious conviction' on the Christian side. For Treitschke, tolerance – which necessarily includes a degree of relativism – goes together with indifference unless indeed very 'firm religious conviction' is warranted.<sup>557</sup>

Treitschke adds:

The state could also give more protection against the tyranny of usury, which is committed by the unclean classes (Schichten) of Jews and Christians in a sad competition (ibid.:62).<sup>558</sup>

After the criticism of the lack of determination on the side of the *state*, Treitschke turns to a respective criticism of *society*:

However, the attitude of the nation itself is always more important than all the measures taken by the state. Our carefreeness and slowness could learn a lot from the economic virtues of the Jewish tribe. Instead, though, we have been only too receptive to the weaknesses and illnesses of the Jewish

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<sup>557</sup> If one thinks like Treitschke that society can afford tolerance only conditional on general 'firm religious conviction', one would hardly ever get to the point of being able to grant toleration in a modern society as the latter does not typically produce 'firm religious conviction'.

<sup>558</sup> This is all Treitschke suggests in terms of legal-practical steps.

Mommsen appeals to Treitschke to distance himself publicly from the anti-Semitic petition hoping Treitschke could be cleared of this affair 'because we are proud of having such a teacher and such a man amongst us' (Mommsen1965:223). Treitschke lauded subsequently both the 'moderate parties' and the government for keeping silent on the issue of the *Antisemitenpetition*. He disqualifies the anti-Semitic contributions in the *Grenzboten* as 'aberrations' for which Bismarck (to whom this publication is generally close) was not responsible (Treitschke 1965a:225).

character (Wesen). Our cosmopolitanism was beneficial to theirs, our thirst for dispute wallowed in the scandal-loving outpourings of the Jewish press. (...) Most of all, though, Jewish pride (Übermuth) has been spoon-fed (grossgezogen) by the unfortunate disunity of our clerical life, by the compulsive mocking and materialism of so many Christians. In the frivolous, infidel circles of Jewry it is a strongly held belief that the huge majority of educated Germans have long broken with Christianity.<sup>559</sup> The time will come, though, and perhaps it is close, when urgency will teach us again to pray, when modest piety will regain its proper place next to the pride of education. In the last instance, every grave social question leads the serious observer back to religion. The German Jewish question will not come to a rest completely (...) before our Israelite fellow citizens will be convinced through our attitude that we are a Christian people (Volk) and want to remain so (ibid.:62f).

This concluding paragraph shows that Treitschke's attack on the Jews is also an effort at disciplining potentially unruly or disloyal Germans of whichever religious background. The 'Jewish question' appears here as a mere symptom of what counts for Treitschke as a crisis of *German* society in general. Jewish 'pride' (Übermuth) is presented as an indicator for the lack of Christian identity on the side of the Germans – with all its implications for civil obedience and state loyalty ('Staatsgesinnung'). In this section of the text, the underlying logic seems to be: disciplining the Jews helps disciplining the Germans.

In December 1880, Treitschke dedicated the last section of his end of the year- review in *Preussische Jahrbücher* to the 'Jewish Question' (Treitschke 1965a:225-227). He notes that 'no politician of any influence' would even think about a revocation of legal emancipation, while no reasonable practical suggestions have been put forward that would help solving the 'Jewish question'. Treitschke concludes:

It is solely up to civil society (bürgerliche Gesellschaft), and in particular to the Jews themselves, to overcome gradually the existing discontent (Verstimmung) that cannot be denied anymore (ibid.:226).

Treitschke establishes that

- nobody currently considers taking back emancipation

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<sup>559</sup> Cassel (1880:22f) argues that 'the Jews have lost their pious Semitic spirit amongst the Germanic heathens' (not the Germans have lost their piety through the influence of Jews). He asserts that only after emancipation, many Jews 'have been infected by the frivolous spirit of our century' (ibid.:23).

- no options exist for the state and the political sphere to address the 'Jewish question' and to challenge the particularism of Jewish 'tribal consciousness' and its 'provocative' manifestations
- the 'Jewish question', however, undeniably exists and its discussion is legitimate (although preferably this should happen without rousing too much passion).

From this he concludes that the problem has to be solved by 'civil society' – i.e., not the state. Without indicating, however, how 'civil society' in general should be responding to the issue, he puts the responsibility on the Jews. This is followed by the claim that there are, however, no signs that the Jews were ready to undertake any steps towards solving the 'Jewish question'. The Jews respond even to moderate critique with 'angry diatribes' (ibid.:226f); they mobilize Jews in the foreign press 'against their fellow Germans', exert 'open terrorism' against supporters of the anti-Semitic petition, and 'indeed conspire to damage Christian fellow citizens whom they dislike'. In the meantime, Jews continue to publish pamphlets that scorn Christian theology.

This catalogue of offences – unreasonableness, treason, terrorism, conspiracy – that owes a lot to traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes, is followed by a conclusion that contradicts the earlier affirmation of emancipation:

Is it not obvious that this slippery slope will necessarily lead one to call into question once more emancipation? For the strongest argument of the enemies of emancipation used to be that 'the Jews are and remain a nation of their own; if we grant them full civil rights they will form a state within the state'. If Jewry continues to go down the road that they entered recently we will witness the emergence of this state within the state, and then we should hear the Christians shout (und dann müsste sich unter den Christen unfehlbar der Ruf erheben): away with emancipation! (ibid.:227)

Unless those Jews who feel themselves to be 'good Germans' manage to prevent 'their coreligionists' from 'dangerous arrogance (Überhebung) and separation (Absonderung)', Treitschke warns, 'our soil might perhaps come to witness savage eruptions of uncanny hatred that would not do any credit (nicht zur Ehre gereichen würden) to the Germans, Christian or Jewish alike.'

One year and a month after his remarks in the same publication had triggered the 'Berliner Antisemitismusstreit', Treitschke relates that (anonymous) enemies

of the emancipation had said that the fact of a separate Jewish nationality inevitably would make *emancipated* Jews a 'state within the state'. He argues that recent developments in the behaviour of the Jews confirm this earlier anti-emancipation argument and anticipates that – as long as the Jews do not change their ways – there will 'inevitably' come a scream from among the Christians calling for the abrogation of emancipation. Treitschke uses here rhetorical techniques very similar to those adopted in his first contribution: the reference to anonymous skeptics and in particular to an alleged 'scream' invoke the notion of the author as a detached observer. Treitschke suggests that 'the Jewish question' consisted in the particularistic consciousness and arrogance of the Jews. While German-Christian society has granted them emancipation against the warnings of the skeptics, the Jews frustrated the optimistic expectations of their benefactors. While at the moment the state is still well advised to remain patient, it is the assimilated Jews' responsibility to speed up the process of assimilation and to overcome the annoying anomaly of emancipated but not wholly assimilated Jews. Unless the Jews manage to disprove the growing and – as Treitschke implies – legitimate discontent on the side of Christian Germans, they might provoke not only the loss of legal emancipation but also the possibility of new pogroms. Choosing formulations that obscure any agency on the side of the majority of society, Treitschke describes all reactions to Jewish faulty behaviour as quasi-automatic or natural reactions. Treitschke argues that 'savage eruptions of uncanny hatred' would not 'do any credit' to either Christian or Jewish Germans; given Treitschke's dramatic invocation of an anti-Christian hate-campaign, there is also a clear enough intimation – or even threat – of an anti-Jewish pogrom in Treitschke's conclusion.

Treitschke concludes:<sup>560</sup>

My pronounced intention has been to remind the fully Germanized Jews (die gut deutschgesinnten Juden) that the attitude of some of their co-religionists does not meet what any great nation has to demand from its citizens (Treitschke 1965b:228).

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<sup>560</sup> In his 'Response to Herrn Th. Mommsen' (Treitschke 1965b) published in the same issue of the *Preussische Jahrbuecher*; Treitschke indicates that he received Mommsen's contribution after having completed the editing of the journal's December edition.



## 2.2.10.2 BAMBERGER: ON THE NEED FOR BOURGEOIS ORDER

Bamberger concedes that Treitschke intended making a constructive patriotic intervention and acted with 'the best intentions' (Bamberger 1965:151). Treitschke's pamphlet is not an anti-Semitic harangue (Brandschrift). Its *effects*, though, proved to be 'deplorable' (beklagenswerth) because the anti-Semites were able to appropriate it (ibid.:151). Bamberger acknowledges that Treitschke ruled out both reversal of emancipation and expulsion of the Jews and argued for a politics of 'reconciliation'. Moreover, Treitschke's 'demands' would have been received favourably had he only pointed out that the actually very small number of Jews in Germany cannot be of decisive influence on any social issue, and had he opposed the agitation of those who 'search for new legitimization for old unreflected ill feeling (für alte unreflektierte Misgefühle nach neuen Rechtsgründen zu suchen)' (ibid.:152). In fact, however, Treitschke's 'conciliatory' conclusions follow from 'a chain of unreasoned assertions each of which actually works against the intended effect' (ibid.:153). Treitschke's inconclusively argued accusations

cannot but make the accused believe that Treitschke is one of those persecutors who choose plausible pretexts according to time and circumstances in order to justify their own feeling of dislike which has become second nature to them. Should there still be many Jews in Germany who do not think of themselves as Germans, then Treitschke's indictment would only reinforce their feeling of alienation (Fremdheit) (ibid.:154).

Bamberger suggests that, if the tone and manner of persecution are more 'spiteful and cynical' in Germany than in France or England, it cannot lie 'in the nature of the persecuted' but only 'in the nature of the persecutors' (ibid.:155). Bamberger asserts that Treitschke provided the anti-Semites with 'a whole torrent of most equivocal catchphrases (bedenklichsten Stichworte)':

This proceeding that contradicts its professed intention [of reconciliation] can obviously be explained by the fact that in the author himself the inner drives of a certain intellectual tendency have been stronger than those undoubtedly good intentions. He himself stands most of all under the domination of the hereditary antipathy, and where he wants to be doctor he is patient (ibid.).

Bamberger sees that Treitschke's position is inherently contradictory. However, he understands the contradiction as one between an adequate side (liberalism) and an anachronistic side (illiberalism; hereditary antipathy): Treitschke's outlook minus its anachronistic aspects would equal the liberalism shared by Bamberger.

Bamberger argues that not only (nor predominantly) have Jews criticized and polemicized against German culture and its representatives, but polemical criticism has been characteristic of German culture itself. He enumerates a long list of German writers who attacked Luther, Goethe, Hegel or Fichte, and includes in the same breath Richard Wagner, 'who cannot admit that Felix Mendelssohn was a German composer' (ibid.:156), and Eugen Dühring, for his attack on Helmholtz. For Bamberger the anti-Semitic persecution is part and parcel of a longer tradition of German-German discord. He suggests that Treitschke 'attributes the severe criticism of German character (Wesen) and German personalities to some Jews in particular' whom he sees 'only as tolerated guests violating the rules of hospitality (Gastrecht)'. While criticism of German characteristics is actually intrinsic to the German character, Treitschke misrepresents it as an expression of a Jewish lack of gratitude.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Bamberger's contribution is his comment on Treitschke's concern with religion:

Herr von Treitschke, who fights socialism, takes the position of those who hope to be able to fight the evil at its root by restoring religion. If the restoration of religion is [indicative: ist] feasible, this approach would be legitimate [subjunctive (irrealis): hätten recht] insofar as socialist ideas are undeniably linked to irreligious ones. The instinct of the ruling classes of England, France and America has established a form of church life (Kirchlichkeit) necessary for respectability, that is essentially based on the awareness of that link between religion and order (Ordnung). This is not the place to discuss whether something similar or better can be successfully developed in Germany. However, should it be attempted, the Jews certainly will not stand in the way. They have no particular interest in the realization of the big socialist redistribution of wealth (der grossen socialistischen Vermögenstheilung). Only, they find one could use other means of reinforcing Christianity than arousing hate and contempt of the Jews (ibid.:174f).

No other commentator related Treitschke's support for anti-Semitism so directly to the most prominent aspect of Treitschke's publishing at the time, the struggle

against 'socialism'.<sup>561</sup> Bamberger sees here the principal concern of Treitschke's politics, and this is also the only passage of the text where he signals some agreement.

Bamberger claims that 'the Jews' stand – with Treitschke as well as Bamberger – on the side of the defence of order and property and are opposed to socialist redistribution. He concedes that the restoration of religion is a possible means towards that shared goal although he does not clearly argue for or against the use of this weapon.<sup>562</sup> He seems indifferent to any aspect of religion other than its socially stabilizing function. His main point is, however, that neither the principal political goal – fighting off socialism – nor one of the possible weapons – restoring religion – necessitate anti-Jewish agitation: quite the contrary, it puts off a potential ally.

#### 2.2.10.3 MOMMSEN: ON PATRIOTIC DUTY

'The point is', Mommsen writes, to get 'from confusion and disunity towards secure principles of practical agency'. It is the duty of every individual German to 'prove whether we are a free people able to govern itself as well as its moods and to improve on mistakes that have been made' (Mommsen 1965b:218). Mommsen links here the concepts of 'freedom' and self-control to an ethical argument. He makes the German 'people' appear as a moral personality that has to give evidence of its (maturity for) freedom. Such evidence would, for example, consist in being able to discuss 'the idiosyncrasies (Besonderheiten) of the particular nations and tribes with moderation and forbearance (mit Mass und Schonung)' as it is demanded by the necessity of national peace. 'All potential truth and goodwill [of strong critique of tribal idiosyncrasies] notwithstanding' (ibid.:219), its unavoidable generalizations cause bitterness and would not lead to improvement anyway. 'In this above all consist the grave wrong and the immeasurable damage done by Herr v. Treitschke'. Mommsen repeats that

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<sup>561</sup> Bamberger, too, had just published an anti-Social-Democratic pamphlet, 'Germany and Socialism' (1878).

<sup>562</sup> His ambiguity about this manifests itself in the flawed grammar of his formulation that mixes a *realis* if-clause and an *irrealis* main clause: 'Wenn es ausführbar ist, Religion wiederherzustellen, hätten sie jedenfalls insoweit recht...'. However, I am quoting from the text reprinted in Boehlich (1965), so that it cannot be ruled out that this is a misspelling. I have not been able to locate the original publication.

Treitschke's articles 'certainly have been meant benevolently' and 'are certainly based on much truth' but:

The sentiment of difference between that part of the German citizenry (Bürgerschaft) [sc. the Jews] and its large majority had been held down so far by the strong feeling of duty on the side of the better part of the nation that drew the consequences of knowing that equal duty asks for equal rights. Now however this sentiment found itself proclaimed by Herr v. Treitschke to be the 'natural reaction of the Germanic popular feeling against a foreign element', to be 'the eruption of a deep and long suppressed anger'. These have been the words of Herr v. Treitschke, the one man amongst all her writers to whom the German nation owes most gratefulness during her recent grave crises, whose pen was, and still is, one of the best swords in the struggle against the old hereditary enemy of the nation – particularism – a struggle that has been turned around but not yet completed (ibid.).

Mommsen stresses that he does not hold Treitschke responsible for the effects of his interventions (ibid.:220) which he argues Treitschke cannot have intended.

'The question however remains: what did he intend?' Mommsen leaves this question unanswered and resumes discussing the (unintended) effects of Treitschke's intervention. Mommsen reproaches Treitschke for 'preach(ing) civil war' because 'every Jew of German nationality could not but understand the article as saying that he [Treitschke] views them as second class citizens, at best as a reformable punishment battalion (besserungsfähige Strafcompagnie)'.

Treitschke 'might have intended a merely Platonic civil war; but unsurprisingly, it took the same turn that Platonic love tends to take.' Treitschke's intervention deepened the gap and made 'rabble of all classes fall eagerly on the defenceless prey' while even 'the better ones' ended up 'confused and wavering in their attitude'. Mommsen's text conveys his anger about Treitschke's intervention which he sees as detrimental to what he implies had been both men's common political concern in the past: the process of German nation building. Mommsen rules out, however, that Treitschke might simply have intended what he effectively did: promoting anti-Semitism. The behaviour of the old comrade and colleague remains a mysterious and inexplicable disappointment for Mommsen.

Mommsen expresses the hope that anti-Semitic agitation will soon give place to a return of tolerance. He argues that 'tolerance of the synagogue ... goes without saying' and demands 'the more essential (wesentlichere) tolerance of the peculiarity (Eigenartigkeit) of the Jews which is not their responsibility (die von

ihren Trägern nicht verschuldete) but given to them by fate' (ibid.:221).

Mommsen seems to find 'tolerance against religion' not threatened even by the anti-Semitic agitation. Tolerance against 'peculiarity', however, does not go without saying but seems to be a property of the educated classes. In the formulation used by Mommsen before (ibid.:219), 'the strong sense of duty of the better part of the nation' has to 'hold down' the 'sentiment of difference' held by the not so good parts of the nation.

Mommsen asserts again that there is a 'particularity (Sonderstellung) of German Jewry in good things as in bad (im Guten wie im Bösen)' (which he leaves unexplained) but insists that these have to be discussed 'in a way that is acceptable to the reasonable Jew (verständige Jude)'. Mommsen reaffirms that the nation has the duty to protect the Jews' equality both legally and administratively: 'And this duty, which we first of all owe to ourselves, is by no means dependent on good conduct of the Jews' (ibid.:224). Mommsen defends here the abstract universality of legal equality as irrespective of the particular actuality of individual subjects or groups of subjects. Then, however, he shifts from a statement about the *state* and citizenship (where the Jews are to be defended as equals) to one about *civil society*:

But we cannot defend them from the sentiment of strangeness and difference held still today by the Christian German against the Jewish German which – as is shown by the current situation once more – carries a danger for them just as for us: the civil war of a majority against a minority, even as a mere possibility, is a national calamity. This is though, in part, the fault of the Jews. Today the word 'Christianity' might no longer mean fully what it used to mean; nevertheless it is the only word which still defines the entire international civilization of our day and in which millions and millions of people recognize themselves as intrinsically united on our highly populated globe. It is possible to remain outside these boundaries and yet live within the nation, but it is difficult and dangerous. He whose conscience – be it positive or negative – does not permit him to renounce his Judaism and accept Christianity, will act accordingly and will accept the consequences; deliberations of this kind belong into the private chamber, not into public debate (ibid.:224).

Mommsen goes on to state that 'it is a notorious fact' that many Jews are kept from conversion not by conscience 'but by quite different emotions which I can understand but not approve of'. He quotes the existence of numerous 'specifically Jewish societies' that are not concerned with strictly religious

issues: 'I would never join a philanthropic institution obliged by statute to support nobody but people from Holstein'.<sup>563</sup> Mommsen takes up here again his argument made earlier treating the Jews as just one of the many German 'tribes'. However, he admits a small difference:

And while I respect the endeavours and achievements of these societies, I view their separate existence only as an after-effect of the times of medieval system of protection (Schutzjudenzeit).

Respect notwithstanding, these societies are characterized by Mommsen as anachronistic:

If those after-effects are to disappear on the one side, they will have to disappear on the other side as well; and on both sides there is still much to be done. The admission into a large nation has its price. The people from Hanover, Hesse and we from Schleswig-Holstein are in the process of paying it, and we do feel that we are giving up a part of our selves. But we make this sacrifice to our common fatherland. The Jews, too, will not be led by another Moses into the Promised Land; whether they sell trousers or write books, it is their duty to do away with their particularity as far as they can do so without offending their conscience and with a firm hand tear down all barriers between themselves and their German compatriots.

Mommsen mirrors the bifurcated structure of Treitschke's argument who defends legal emancipation and does explicitly not demand the state to 'solve' the 'Jewish Question', but envisages the necessity *for civil society* to find such a solution. Mommsen does not refute, but he re-articulates Treitschke's argument about civil society including the demand for the Jews to 'become Germans'. His argument distinguishes here three groups of persons – or put more abstractly: three positions of agency – in German society. The first group or position is 'we' which refers back to 'the nation'. 'We', 'the nation' have 'the duty' to defend the legal equality of 'the German Jews' (or, 'the Jewish Germans': the second group) but cannot defend 'them' against the 'Christian Germans' who appear to form a third group. Although it is also implied that all three 'groups' together form the nation and will suffer together a 'national calamity' if anti-Semitic agitation prevails, the development of the argument implies that the entity referred to as 'we' is the nation in a more substantial sense than the totality of the three

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<sup>563</sup> Mommsen was born in the North-Western German state of Holstein whose annexion by Prussia from Denmark in 1866 marked one of the major steps towards German unification.

'groups' is. It is evident from the context that 'we' refers to the liberal members of the educated classes who show a strong patriotic commitment. The statement that an anti-Semitic 'civil war of a majority against a minority' would be a 'national calamity' that would affect the Jews just as much as 'us' seems to have the secondary meaning that it brings into danger the liberals and their parties in particular – which was at the time already a clearly visible threat and must have been obvious to Mommsen: the anti-Semitic campaign also signalled the end of the cohabitation of liberalism and Bismarck's state.

The two statements that 'we' have to defend the Jews but that the Jews are themselves 'partly' to blame for the problem that 'the Christian Germans' form a noisy rabble, marks the Jews as contributing to the trouble and 'the nation' as a worrying and worried, fatherly concerned instance.<sup>564</sup> As far as the defence of the Jews coincides with liberal self-definition – namely in the realm of the state and citizenship – the nation 'owes' this engagement to itself and its principles; the defence of the Jews as abstractly equal citizens goes without saying. Beyond this, however, 'the nation' is regrettably not in a position to offer much help: there is nothing that 'we' could possibly do in order to change or alleviate 'the sentiment of strangeness and difference held still today by the Christian German against the Jewish German'. The subsequent statement on the concept of 'Christianity' gives indirectly a reason for this. Although its religious content seems less than relevant in the modern world, the concept 'still defines the entire international civilization of our day' and in it 'millions and millions of people recognize themselves as intrinsically united on our highly populated globe'. While Treitschke defined the German *nation* as intrinsically Christian, i.e. non-Jewish, Mommsen defines 'the entire international civilization' as such. The fact that 'the nation' is unable to defend 'the Jewish Germans' against the 'sentiment' of 'the Christian Germans' seems to imply that 'the nation' is intrinsically part of that global Christian 'civilization', in other words: it *is* Christian, although 'merely' in a cultural, not (anymore) in a strictly spiritual-religious sense. While behind Treitschke's claim that the nation-state needs to 'have' a religion sits the horror of particularism and social atomization, Mommsen seems to imply that a world

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<sup>564</sup> Cp. Ghassan Hage's (1998) concept of the liberal 'white worrier' in the context of Australian 'multi-culturalism'.

order of (nation-) states needs a unified global 'civilization' to avoid general carnage – both of which are fully justified fears.<sup>565</sup>

Non-converted Jews, although formally equal citizens, place themselves 'outside these boundaries', i.e. outside global civilization. Mommsen argues that it is 'possible' but 'difficult and dangerous' to do so. He implies that Jews obviously know that; if some of them take such a risky decision they can be assumed to have urgent enough reasons. Mommsen names two possible reasons, only one of which he finds legitimate: one is religion, a private affair that ought to take place exclusively in the 'private chamber'. The illegitimate reason is Jewish particularism and (proto-) nationalism.<sup>566</sup> Mommsen's position is clear: difference and particularism are acceptable and do not put into question equal rights even if one places oneself outside the allegedly global civilization of Christianity. Nothing of that sort, however, should ooze out of the private chamber into the public realm. Particularism *in public* is an anachronistic left-over of the feudal past. The precarious process of nation-building rests on the readiness of *all* citizens to sacrifice public particularisms and restrict their idiosyncrasies to the private chamber – although it may hurt.

#### 2.2.10.4 NAUDH: SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Joël pointed to the contradiction between the massiveness of Treitschke's argument and its rather thin conclusions. He suggests that the only consistent conclusion from Treitschke's argument would be the revocation of legal emancipation, a conclusion that 'an elegant author' leaves for others to formulate (Joël 1965:25).<sup>567</sup> Naudh actually makes such practical suggestions which he

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<sup>565</sup> In its most basic structure, both forms of this argument are a continuation of the line of thought begun by Hobbes, the war-like society of competing individual producers needs either a Leviathan to keep it from destroying itself or a more sublime alternative that prevents a full-blown Leviathan from becoming unavoidable. The better disciplined and regulated 'civil society' is – i.e. the more 'civilized' –, the less ruthless a Leviathan is needed (cp.: Dressen 1999). Spinoza for example knew from the Dutch experience that circumstances permitting, the Leviathan can stay in the cupboard (cp. Smith 1997).

<sup>566</sup> Although Mommsen avoids using the actual term, his allusions are clear enough; he ridicules Graetz's historiography as 'talmudistic scribbling of history' (talmudistische Geschichtsschreiberei) (ibid.: 214).

<sup>567</sup> Philippson wrote that the German Jews can be optimistic because the Jew-haters do not have any practical suggestions to offer (AZ 23.3.1880, No 12:178).



supports with a gloating reference to two speeches by Napoleon.<sup>568</sup> He underlines triumphantly that these come from the ‘birthplace of the “rights of men”’ and the ‘glorious principles of 1789’.

According to the translation used by Naudh, Napoleon calls the Jews a ‘contemptible (verächtliche) nation’, that needed to be treated as ‘a distinct people, not a religious sect’ (ibid.:196) since they form ‘a nation within the nation’ (ibid.:196f). The Jews, the ‘robber barons (Raubritter) of modern times, veritable swarms of ravens (Rabenschwärme),<sup>569</sup> appropriate whole villages. Since they are ‘no real citizens’ they must be treated according to state law not civil law. Collective measures would be legitimate because ‘whatever evil Jews do, does not stem from the faults of individuals but from the basic character of this people’ (ibid.:197). Naudh also quotes from the Napoleonic law of March 17, 1808, that contained mostly business regulations intended to cancel as well as prevent particular types of financial claims of Jewish creditors (ibid.:198).<sup>570</sup>

Naudh is gloating about being able to quote Napoleonic law that he uses as the model for his own list of anti-Jewish measures. Naudh additionally suggests a halt to immigration, a ban on Jewish entry to all state or communal office and the Jews’ removal from such posts (in exchange for compensation), the abolition of active and passive vote, expropriation of real estate (also with compensation), ban from the stock exchange and from running public bars (Schankgewerbe), homogeneous distribution of all Jews over the country and a *numerus clausus* to the effect that surplus numbers of Jews have to emigrate. All discriminations are meant to apply also to ‘baptised Jews’ and to descendants from mixed marriage into the third generation ‘at least’. Two of Naudh’s suggestions are only indirectly targeting the Jews: all newspaper articles have to be signed by the actual author, and the advertising business (Inseratenwesen) has to become a state monopoly.<sup>571</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> He refers to speeches held by Napoleon on April 30 and May 7, 1806; Naudh quotes from the journal ‘Reichsbote’.

<sup>569</sup> Popular bird mythology seems to differ in English and German vernacular. German ravens (*Raben*) are held to be thieves (like the magpie in both German and English) but they act in swarms, not alone (as the magpie).

<sup>570</sup> All Jews were made liable to obtain annually a licence for doing business and their freedom of movement was restricted.

<sup>571</sup> In the context of his rejection of a ‘mixed culture’, Endner actually suggests the ‘elimination (Ausmerzungen)’ of the ‘Jewish element’ from the ‘German body’ (Endner 1965:114). What precisely Endner meant by this is not clear.

### 2.2.10.5 BRESSLAU: ON THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF THE JEWS

Not unlike Mommsen, Bresslau writes that when he first read about the recent anti-Semitic agitation he felt no urge to intervene. The statement by Treitschke, however, with whom he used to stand in 'friendly-collegial relations', sharing 'essentially a common standpoint in political affairs' (Bresslau 1965a:53), was one he could not leave unanswered. He expresses the wish to convince Treitschke of the inaccuracy, unfairness and harmfulness of his intervention, while stressing that he is not 'an unconditional apologist of our Jewry (Judenthums)' (ibid.:73).

Bresslau states that it has always been 'popular to look for a scapegoat', and that in Germany the Jews tend to form a 'convenient whipping boy'.<sup>572</sup> Treitschke, however, given his academic and political position, could be expected not to repeat 'accusations heard a hundred times before': instead he should 'say what should happen in order to solve' the 'Jewish question'. Bresslau writes: 'I miss such positive suggestions'.

You reject abolition or restriction of our emancipation as impossible and unworthy, but finally you restrict yourself to moral exhortations and for the lack of any other suggestion you put the solution of the problem into the hands of the Jews themselves, whom you call out to be Germans.

Bresslau points out that although Treitschke did not deny that the German Jews were in the process of becoming Germans, his intervention contributed 'to make the barriers that still exist between Germans and Jews higher and stronger' (ibid.:75).

Bresslau points out repeatedly the lack of a 'positive suggestion' about how to solve the 'Jewish question' and then formulates his own proposals in the concluding section of his contribution. His argument focusses on changing the public image of the Jews. He argues that representations of the Jew are most often modelled on their 'lowest elements' and that these representations are responsible for the generally held prejudice about the Jews:

The Jews that are presented in literature or on stage are either noble and good characters, who, though, are presented as exceptions, or they are junk dealers, peddlers and usurers whose language triggers the laughter, and

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<sup>572</sup> He denies, however, that anti-Jewish agitation is generally shared throughout Germany.

whose mean behaviour triggers the moral outrage of the multitude (ibid.:75).

Against this cliché, 'every single Jew ... has to conquer his civil and social position anew ever and ever again', and even then is seen as a mere exception (ibid.:75f).<sup>573</sup>

Christians are rather unfamiliar with the great mass of the urban Jewish population who live in quiet civil industriousness (in stiller bürgerlicher Arbeitsamkeit) without either the pompous luxury of the financial aristocracy or the rotten dirt of the existence of usurers and peddlers. (...) If one could succeed in assembling the concept of the Jew (den Begriff Jude) from the characteristics of that middle class (Mittelklasse) without being influenced by those higher or lower exceptions (Ausnahmen nach oben und nach unten), I reckon the so-called Jewish question would be significantly closer to its solution (ibid.:76).

A man like Treitschke, 'so extraordinarily gifted with the talent of the word', could make an essential contribution to such a project.

Bresslau deals with the problem of anti-Jewish sentiment as a case of prejudice. He seems to suggest that the search for 'scapegoats' is a universal, quasi-natural reaction to social crisis, while the question of who in particular will be the scapegoat is based on prejudice, which in turn is a result of false or selective representations of social reality. He suggests that misleading representations of the Jew should be changed. Bresslau suggests a (counter-) strategy of media representation that would de-emphasize the Jewish poor as well as the very rich and make the public image of Jewry consciously middle-class. However, Bresslau does not indicate how he thinks his 'positive suggestion' to change the public image could be implemented.<sup>574</sup>

In his reply to Treitschke's reply Bresslau concludes that despite disagreements on a number of issues (Bresslau 1965b:95), 'there can be no disagreement between us about what is evil and mean and therewith worth fighting' within Jewry. Bresslau assures Treitschke of his co-operation in this

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<sup>573</sup> Bresslau tells about his experience with a man who was 'highly educated and very favourably minded' towards himself who still made him the 'questionable compliment' that he was 'not really a Jew'

<sup>574</sup> It needed to be asked how could writers, journalists and scholars be persuaded to make the image of Jewry more middle-class? Which social dynamic would possibly be the basis of such a shift? Apart from that, it is questionable whether a uniformly 'middle class' image of German Jewry would stand comparison with social reality. The imagery of 'stille bürgerliche Arbeitsamkeit' seems one-sided and (at least to some extent) liberal wishful thinking.

fight, adding, however, that '*this* fight cannot be fought in public' (italics in the original) and that the offer of co-operation is conditional on Treitschke supporting the Jewish 'defence of our honour that is being slandered' and 'the defence of our fatherland that some want to take away from us (ibid.:95f). After and despite legal emancipation, a 'social excommunication' of 'German Jewry as a whole' is being attempted. Bresslau demands that Treitschke declare himself clearly in support of emancipation of those Jews who are, or want to be, proper Germans:

I may hope that we in turn can also trust on the support of my colleague in this just struggle of defence (...); and I am sure that when the leaders of this (the anti-Semitic) movement still continue pretending to the German people (dem deutschen Volke vorzuspiegeln) that Heinrich von Treitschke was their ally, it does not happen with his consent (ibid.:96).

Judging from the context, Bresslau does not seem to be sarcastic.



### 3. Conclusions

#### 3.1 The *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*: the bones of contention

As suggested in the presentation and discussion of the text material (Part 2) the *Streit* was a dispute about ten interrelated, and to varying degrees overlapping, questions. In the following I will briefly review what these were and then examine what tied these issues, or fields of contention, together into one discursive event, the *Streit*.

- *The question of the origin, extent and meaning of the current anti-Jewish campaign (cp. chapter 2.2.1)*

*Treitschke* formulated the positions that triggered the *Streit* in the context of his analysis of the growing precariousness of international relations. The continued existence of the *kleindeutsche* nation-state is the overriding value underlying his analysis. The international situation makes enforcing national cohesion, including religiosity and *Sittlichkeit*, more urgent and this is the framework for his discussion of anti-Semitism.

*Treitschke* claims anti-Semitism is a 'symptom' of a general anti-liberal trend. While he expresses ambivalence about the demotic elements of the anti-Semitic movement, he strongly welcomes the 'deeper' reality that the symptom is said to refer to. *Treitschke*'s position on the concept of the nation is complicated by a tension between on the one hand his reference to *Volksgeist* as a central analytical category, on the other hand his elitist and hierarchical conception of society: he celebrates *ethnos* but demonizes *demos*.

While earlier forms of Jew-baiting (especially the events of 1819) are dismissed as 'medieval', liberal rejection of anti-Semitism is denounced as merely reversed Jew-baiting, equally anachronistic and illegitimate. The current anti-Jewish campaign is characterized as a legitimate and considered reaction against the negative (side-)effects of Jewish emancipation. *Treitschke* emphasizes that the 'Jewish question' is more acute and of a different character in Germany than in neighboring countries and it cannot be suppressed easily: anti-Semitism is an authentic expression of a general anti-liberal tendency of the *Volksgeist* (although articulated in different ways by members of different social

groups). While he rejects some specific articulations of anti-Semitism, he welcomes the general tendency.

*Graetz, Meyer, Bresslau and Joël* reject Treitschke's interpretation of anti-Semitism as a 'symptom' of a change in the *Volksgeist*. They assert that the anti-Semitic movement is a marginal phenomenon and merely a product of demagoguery and manipulation, in particular by enemies of Bismarck, of the Empire and of National Liberalism. *Naudh* supports Treitschke but differs in two significant aspects. He identifies current anti-Semitism with all previous forms of Jew-hatred and argues that there has been an uninterrupted continuity of 'eternal' anti-Semitism since the times of Moses. Further, he defends the more populist forms of anti-Semitism against Treitschke's *bildungsbürgerlich* elitism and – elaborating on a remark made by Treitschke himself – develops a nationalist-populist criticism of the bourgeois concept of *Bildung*.

*Bamberger* and *Oppenheim*, like other liberal commentators, agree with Treitschke's view that anti-Semitism is a partial aspect of a wider anti-liberal agenda. *Bamberger* suggests that it originates within the educated class and is less significant in the lower classes, but despite being a minority view should not be underestimated. *Oppenheim* goes as far as calling anti-Semitism a 'pretext'. He holds responsible the triumph of *Realpolitik* and the brutalization of political culture, partly as an effect of the experience of warfare. Although he warns that civilizational progress can be reversed, he remains all in all optimistic. *Cassel* adds a different perspective with his remark that Jews are 'begrudged' the benefits of emancipation because society as a whole does not enjoy liberty.

While *Cassel* denounced anti-Semitism as an 'exuberance' of nationalism, in the *Declaration of the Notables* it was argued that anti-Semitism is parochial, particularist and threatens national unity. All those who can make beneficial contributions should be integrated and assimilated into the nation. Out of all the documents, the *Declaration* is the one that most unequivocally asserts the link between the defense of Jewish emancipation and that of the liberal socio-economic order. *Mommsen* asserted that the success of national unification has created anti-Semitism as its 'deformed child' which is now threatening its 'parent', national unity. Although he shows himself confident that national unity will survive this (self-incurred) backlash, it does grave damage to the nation.

- *The question of the allegedly specifically German character of the 'German Jewish question' (cp. chapter 2.2.2)*

It is a peculiar characteristic of *Treitschke's* argument (as far as I can see, shared by no other anti-Jewish writer of the time) that he does not just claim that there is a 'Jewish question' but a specifically *German* 'Jewish question'.

Treitschke argues that on the one hand the weakness and belatedness of German nation building, on the other hand the numbers and specific characteristics of the Jews that live in, and are migrating to, Germany constitute the *German* 'Jewish question'. The Jews immigrating to Germany are 'Jews of the Polish branch'. They are numerous, rise easily into positions of power and are less assimilable than the 'Spanish Jews' of Western Europe. Instead of assimilating, they became more arrogant and stubbornly idiosyncratic the more influential they were thanks to legal emancipation. Treitschke's argument culminates in the notion that the history of the 'Spanish' Jews is a 'history of freedom' like that of the 'occidental' nations, while that of the 'Polish' branch of Jewry is not. This lack of a 'heroic' history makes the latter unassimilable to German culture.

Few respondents (*Cassel, Rülff*) defended the legitimacy of migration. Most (*Bamberger, Lazarus, Graetz, Neumann*) denied that there is clear statistical evidence that would support Treitschke's claim and asserted the loyalty and Germanity of the majority of German Jews, and even that of the 'Germanic' Jews in Poland (*Rülff, Bamberger*). Lazarus and Graetz ridiculed the notion that a numerically small minority like the Jews could 'corrupt' the moral fibre of the German nation. Treitschke's claim of a correlation between Jewish willingness to assimilate and the differing ethnicity of Jews of the 'Spanish' and the 'Polish' branch was rejected unanimously and with detailed historical argument. *Bresslau* in particular refuted Treitschke's ethnic interpretation with a socio-historical explanation.

The one aspect of Treitschke's argument here which was not challenged was his claim that German national unity is singularly precarious and needs to be actively defended.



- *The question of how to define German culture, Jewish culture, and the concept of a 'mixed culture' (cp. chapter 2.2.3)*

Treitschke suggests that unless the Jews 'become Germans', Germanic civilization is in danger of being replaced by 'German-Jewish mixed culture'. Although he does not demand formal religious conversion, he demands the Jews should completely assimilate culturally. He names as evidence for a Jewish lack of determination to assimilate the failure of Jews to make first rank contributions to German culture; they are prominent only in inferior practices such as journalism.

Treitschke's argument here is based on two presuppositions:

- becoming German is a *cultural issue*. One crucial aspect of culture is *economic behaviour* while religion – as opposed to 'religiosity' – is secondary; literature and journalism are exemplary because they are cultural and economic at the same time;
- the Jewish failure to assimilate threatens the *unity and purity* of German culture.

No contributor challenged the validity and necessity of assimilation as such, except *Nadyr* who countered that the German Jews are already *too* 'Gemanized'.

*Lazarus*, *Bresslau* and *Oppenheim* held against Treitschke that the Jews contributed significantly, and saw this contribution as evidence of a commitment to German culture and nation. Treitschke replied with a discussion of Heine; he acknowledges Heine's merits but attributes them to his Germanness: they have, as it were, been achieved only *despite* Heine's Jewishness.

*Bamberger* and *Lazarus* challenged the concept of 'pure culture' and argued that the potential of any culture depended on its ability to assimilate. *Bresslau* also asserted that German culture is a 'mixed culture' resting on Germanity, Christianity and classical antiquity. He supported Treitschke's demand for the Jews to 'become Germans', but asserts that they are more clearly in the process of becoming Germans than for example Catholic ultra-montanists.

*Lazarus* suggested that the concept of historical progress that underpins Treitschke's position needed to be re-articulated. He argues that progress consists in growing diversity. The earlier stage within a development ought not to have to disappear but ought to co-exist with subsequent stages, as in the case of Judaism and Christianity. The 'permanent vocation of the Jews' was the furthering of

difference while at the same time being a particular embodiment of the generically human.

*Naudh* also defends diversity against universality, but the thrust of his contribution is to accuse liberalism of ignoring the value of diversity. Liberal egalitarianism tries to distract from the danger that unassimilable Jews constitute for German particularity. He rejects the notion that German culture is a 'mixed culture' because Greeks, Romans and Germans are 'of the same tribe'. Up to the present moment, Semitic influences have been irrelevant to Germanic culture. Jews have to be excluded from both state and society because their parasitical and un-ethical character is a racial trait which can not be overcome by assimilation.

*Treitschke* also rejects the notion that German culture is a 'mixed culture'. Differing from *Naudh*, he claims that German culture has 'amalgamated' Germanic, Christian and classical elements to the effect that they no longer constitute a 'mixture' of distinct elements. *Treitschke* admits that German culture is an 'amalgam' but does not want that amalgam to be *further* mixed with 'neo-Jewish' elements.

While most respondents engaged in a defense of (some remaining) Jewish difference against *Treitschke*'s demand for complete assimilation, *Bamberger* and *Lazarus* complemented this by making a point about the affinity of the German and Jewish 'spirits': the Germans are the people Jews have been most strongly attracted to out of all peoples, and the high level of emotion in the *Streit* itself is evidence of this. Both Jews and Germans are inclined towards spirituality, cosmopolitanism, abstract thinking and speculation (both in the intellectual and commercial sense). *Lazarus* emphasizes that – differences in dogma notwithstanding – there are strong affinities in morality (*Sittenlehre*) and all essential aspects of religiosity. *Bamberger* stresses that given the fundamental affinity, the remaining differences of character and temperament are beneficial for German culture and politics.

- *The notions of the Jewish economic spirit and the German spirit of work (cp. chapter 2.2.4)*

*Treitschke* held (in his first contribution) that the Jews, in their appearance as speculators and usurers, characterised by dishonesty, deception and greed, were about to destroy what *Treitschke* thought were the traditional, pre-capitalist ethics of the German people, its 'good-natured willingness to work', i.e. not for utility and money profit only. *Treitschke* quoted the disproportionate Jewish involvement in the *Gründer*-boom as evidence. The 'anti-capitalist' undertones of *Treitschke*'s remarks sparked a strong reaction from *Philippson*, *Oppenheim*, *Bamberger* and the *Declaration of the Notables*, to the effect that *Treitschke* did not come back to this line of reasoning. *Treitschke*'s adoption of what *Oppenheim* denounced as a *quasi* socialist argument was the only aspect of his argument that *Treitschke* straight away abandoned. *Oppenheim* defends the notion of work as business against any alternative notion of work as an 'ethical' or state service. The *Declaration* asserts the link between the demand for religious equality and that for 'equal sun in competition'. *Bamberger* asserts that successful businesses do not exploit society but make it richer and likens *Treitschke*'s anti-Jewish stance to the Pan-Slavonic campaign against the (economically successful) German minority in Russia (which had been criticized by *Treitschke* himself). *Joël* and *Oppenheim* stressed that Jews were not involved in the *Gründungen* beyond the extent of their share amongst business-people. *Bresslau* supports *Treitschke*'s attack on Jewish speculators but points out that the Jews' higher share in the financial sectors has specific historical reasons not of the Jews' own choosing,

The 'straightforward' anti-Semites *Naudh* and *Endner*, however, took up the economic argument and developed it in more detail. As with *Treitschke*, the racial, ethnic-cultural and economic arguments are closely intertwined in their comments. For *Naudh*, Christianity was a revolution against 'Manchesterism' and utilitarianism as invented by the Jews two thousand years ago. Contemporary Germans are the 'breadwinners' for unproductive Jews who have become so numerous – especially in Berlin – as to overburden the Germans. *Naudh* demands a halt to Jewish immigration, while *Endner* suggests (in addition)

resettling the Jews in remote and uncultivated parts of the countryside and making them embrace productive occupations.

- *The question of how state, nation, race and religion should relate to each other (cp. chapter 2.2.5)*

This question is – quantitatively and conceptually – at the centre of the *Streit*. No participant in the *Streit* questions the validity of nationalism and the notion that the nation-state is the form of state adequate to and characteristic of modern society. *Lazarus* and *Cohen* are most explicit in arguing that the building of nations and nation-states is a crucial civilizational and ethical endeavour for humanity; *Cohen* goes as far as declaring the nation as significant as religion.

All contributors emphasize that the nation ought to create unity as well as the consciousness of unity, i.e. national consciousness. However, *Phillipson* and *Bamberger* in particular emphasize that ‘exaggerated’ nationalism can ‘degenerate’ and become exclusionary. For them, ‘exaggerated nationalism’ overlaps with socialism and threatens the liberal-capitalist social order. In the case of pan-Slavism, *Treitschke*, too, rejects a variation of (*quasi*-racial) nationalism because it undermines rather than strengthens ‘healthy patriotism’. *Cohen* warns that nationalism must not become a ‘moral norm’ and must not exclude those from the nation who do not have, or do not want to have, another nation (such as, it is implied, the German Jews).

The relationship between *race*, *tribe* and *nation* is one of the salient points in the *Streit*. *Treitschke*, *Bamberger* and *Mommsen* argue that nations are constituted by the amalgamation of tribes. In the process – a crucial aspect of historical progress – the nation’s tribal constituents have to lose to a large extent their particular characteristics. However, *Mommsen* also emphasizes that it is important that their differing particular characteristics go into the national amalgam. Only *Naudh* seems to disagree with the basic theory that the nation is constituted through an amalgamation of different elements. While *Treitschke* deplores the decrease of conversions and intermarriage as a negative side-effect of emancipation, *Naudh* argues intermarriage is not a means of assimilation at all but helps further Jewish domination. *Cohen* holds that a degree of racial unity of the nation is necessary and that the nation ought to develop ‘its racial type’. Only

Cohen and Naudh (neither of whom subscribes to a strict dualism of mind and body) reject the conception formulated by *Lazarus* (and silently shared by all the others) that *national spirit* ought to overcome and transcend *racial-corporeal matter*. Unlike Naudh, however, Cohen argues for assimilation, implying that 'racial type' is in itself already the result of historical development: national 'spirit' and racial/tribal 'body' overcome each other in a more dialectical way, resulting in a new national spirit/body. He also holds that although 'racial instinct' is 'natural', it must not be allowed to degenerate into a principle of exclusion of those 'who do not have, nor want to have, another nation'.

*Lazarus* also entertains some kind of a dialectical tension between what he calls the 'objective' and 'subjective' elements of the nation. While language (not race) is the most important *objective* element in the formation of a nation, the nation is constituted by a *subjective*, spiritual as well as historical constellation that intervenes in objectively given conditions. Although not independent from material conditions, the nation is 'a spiritual creation of the individuals who constitute it'. The national spirit is in turn, however, a product of common history and destiny (which are at least partly objective elements). Despite his insistence on the relevance of 'objective' factors, *Lazarus* rejects the reference to 'race' because it means undermining the human effort to spiritualise existence.

Naudh embraces a static concept of 'race' that the 'national spirit' cannot overcome. *Bamberger* argues that the category of 'race' has been adopted only to further legitimise an injustice that used to be justified on grounds of religion. The discussion of 'race' is but a pretext for the continued and anachronistic existence of an ancient antipathy.

A second bone of contention is the relationship between *religion and nation*. *Treitschke* writes that the Germans are a 'Christian nation', while the German *state* – as a modern state – is secular. However, the Germans ought to 'preserve the Christian character of their institutions'. *Treitschke* and *Cohen* agree that different religions can only temporarily coexist in one nationality and with one religion ruling over the other(s). *Philippson* and *Lazarus* argue that politics are beyond religion, and the Jews ought to maintain their religious particularity. *Cohen* rejects this as a 'flawed liberal slogan' and argues that all members of a nation ought to participate in that nation's religious foundation. However, *Cohen*

also rejects Treitschke's notion that Judaism is the religion of 'an alien tribe': for Cohen common *religiosity* is what matters, while the difference between Jewish and Christian religious *form* is unproblematic: also, the German Jews 'breathe out of the culture of Christianity'. Naudh argues that religion is the supreme expression of morality ('Sittlichkeit') and as such pivotal to the national character of a people. Like Cohen and Treitschke, he rejects the idea that politics are unaffected by religion. Unlike Cohen, however, he does not distinguish between religiosity and religious form which brings him to a different conclusion: under the condition of modernity – where the state is based on nationality to which religion is crucial – the separation of state and church is meaningless.

All contributors advocate Jewish assimilation except Naudh who does not believe that assimilation is possible. Treitschke's position is ambivalent: he advocates assimilation but the way he portrays the Jews and their culture seems to suggest *implicitly* the conclusion (drawn by Naudh *explicitly* on the grounds of 'race') that the Jews cannot assimilate to the German nation.

- *The question of the relationship between Christian and Jewish religion (cp. Chapter 2.2.6)*

*Treitschke* as well as *Lazarus* and *Cohen* discuss the question of the relationship between Christian and Jewish religion under the perspective of what it means for national unification, although Cohen includes more strictly theological arguments in his discourse than Treitschke and Lazarus. Cohen and Treitschke insist – against Lazarus – that religion is central to nation-building, while Cohen disagrees from Treitschke on the definition of religion, employing a (Kantian) distinction between specific 'religions' and 'religiosity'. While Treitschke emphasizes that both Christian denominations can come together in the nation because they share the same religion – excluding the Jews from this possibility – Cohen asserts that adherents of all forms of religion (*Glaubensarten*) can come together as long as they share *Religion* in the sense of (ethical) *religiosity*.

While Treitschke and Naudh see Christianity as a departure and a progressive development away from Judaism, Lazarus and Cohen maintain that Christianity

added a new element to the evolution of religion without making the continuing existence of Judaism redundant or anachronistic. Lazarus argues for maintaining religious difference despite national amalgamation, Cohen argues for only temporary religious difference until a higher synthesis of Judaism and Protestantism is achieved. All authors rely on a concept of progress: while Treitschke argues that Judaism is already sublated and overcome – i.e. rendered anachronistic – in Protestantism, Cohen expects this to happen in the future. Lazarus holds growing diversity itself for a sign of progress. For Naudh, even those elements of Judaism that were absorbed into Christianity are evil and need to be eliminated: Christianity came into its own only in its successful history within the ‘Aryan peoples’, not, however, in its futile attempts to win over the Jews.

- *The question of the nationality of the German Jews (cp. Chapter 2.2.7)*

There is a general agreement in the *Streit* that the Jews were and are obliged to ‘become Germans’ as part of the ‘barter’, as it were, *emancipation for assimilation*. Treitschke claims they did not yet do so sufficiently (with which some of the interlocutors also agree) and casts doubt on whether they are actually *capable* of complete assimilation. Here lies a fundamental fault-line which runs not only between Treitschke and his liberal critics, but also through Treitschke’s argument itself when he demands, on the one hand, assimilation, but on the other hand denounces it as an impossibility. With the second face of his discourse Treitschke comes close to Naudh’s unambiguous position.

Treitschke explicitly chooses a polemic against Graetz as his vehicle for demonstrating that the anti-Semitism dispute is essentially about the question of nationality. Instrumental to this choice is the argument about the differing evaluation of the heritage of German-Jewish culture. Judging from the formulations quoted by Treitschke, Graetz’s writing vacillates between a (so to say, ‘proto-Zionist’) Jewish nationalist sentiment and a democratic perspective on German culture that emphasizes the failure of German Enlightenment writers to support unequivocally the cause of Jewish emancipation. Treitschke straightforwardly rejects paradigmatic figures of German-Jewish culture (with the exception of Gabriel Riesser) as well as German non-Jews who were

supportive of the Jewish cause (Lessing). Through selective quotation he constructs an exaggerated portrayal of Graetz as a Jewish nationalist and claims that Graetz's attitude is representative for that of the German Jews of the time.

*Joël* points out the contradictory character of Treitschke's accusing the Jews of fancying themselves as non-Germans when they ought to assimilate, and at the same time of being aliens who only masquerade as Germans for tactical reasons. Joël is also the only author who defends Graetz against Treitschke's (as well as Cohen's and Philippson's) verdicts.

*Lazarus*, *Cohen* and *Meyer* unequivocally assert that the German Jews are Germans. *Lazarus*, *Bamberger* and most strongly *Cohen* regret having to respond 'as Jews' at all. Philippson reproaches *Cohen* for directing the demand to become (more) German at the Jews when it should be directed at all Germans. While rejecting the notion of a Jewish nationality, all respondents nevertheless assert and defend some sense of Jewishness – other than a sense of Jewish nationality – that would be compatible with assimilation.

Apart from Joël, only *Oppenheim* rejects the notion that the Jews lack Germanness. For him, the Jews' defending their emancipation does not contradict but is evidence of their determination to assimilate to German nationality and culture.

- *The question whether there has been a long-standing hatred of the Jews that can be used as evidence of their evil nature (cp. chapter 2.2.8)*

*Treitschke* supports his claim that complete Jewish amalgamation is impossible with the further claim that the 'abyss' between Jews and Gentiles is 'thousands' of years old and especially made permanent by the fact that the Jews are a 'nation without a state'. This brings them inevitably into conflict with any existing state's endeavors to protect its cultural-political unity. The conclusion has to be for the Jews to act with discretion and modesty in order not to provoke any escalation of this unbridgeable contradiction. In this context Treitschke refers affirmatively to the Roman state's persecution of the Christians as these were then seen as just another Jewish sect.

*Cassel* points out that this contradicts Treitschke's repeated invocations of Christianity. It clearly shows that for Treitschke religion is subordinate to *raison*



*d'état*. Graetz responds on the level of historical facts, trying to disprove the existence of official Roman anti-Judaism. The crux of Treitschke's argument, that Jewish (or rather, any) cultural particularism has by necessity to be overruled by 'the hard necessity of the unity of the state' is in this context not challenged by any respondent.

- *The question of the link between emancipation and assimilation and the concept of rights (cp. chapter 2.2.9)*

Treitschke's remarks on legal emancipation are highly ambivalent. On the one hand, he endorses 'civil equality' as a general mark of 'civilization', which has to be paid for, however, with complete assimilation. On the other hand, he implies that the Jews' 'tribal characteristics' do not allow complete assimilation to happen, which in turn means that emancipation can never be 'complete'.

Joël and Philippson endorse a natural law conception of civic rights, while 'mock-Börne' claims that civil and human rights are inseparable because they emerge together within the context of (bourgeois) society. Philippson interprets Treitschke's position in the light of a formulation by another anti-Jewish pamphletist who argued – in historicist-positivist fashion – that civil rights for the Jews are rooted in the 'positive will of the state' and the 'overall culture of its subjects', not in the individualistic concept of universal natural law. Philippson qualifies the natural law position by stating that the state cannot deny civil rights to anybody 'born within the country to parents who were also born there'. 'Börne' asserts that rights are formulated irrespective of individual merit. He strongly endorses the necessity of assimilation but argues that only general social and political progress can deliver it.

Cohen rejects the unmediated concept of natural law and argues that the action of the state is, or ought to be, rooted in how the *particular* nation conceives of the *universal* 'moral law'. By insisting on how the universal is articulated in a specific national culture Cohen attempts to mediate the two concepts of 'right', the universal and the positive, historically relative.

- *The question of what Treitschke had intended, and what the interlocutors suggest should be done (cp. chapter 2.210)*

Treitschke's 'demand' is quite simply that the Jews give up their remaining reservations about 'becoming Germans'. The anti-Semitic movement (which is the German people's response to the lack of respect on the side of the Jews) should help the Germans reaching 'a stricter concept of the state and its obligations' and 'a more vigorous national consciousness'. Not the state but only civil society can solve the 'Jewish Question' caused by the arrogance of the Jews. Inasmuch as the Germans have been indulging in tolerance, Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and relativism (endangering their own 'firm religious conviction'), they are complicit in the 'power of Jewry'. Only a strong reassertion of Christian conviction and the overcoming of clerical disunity can create a situation in which the Germans will be able to 'afford' being tolerant. The German nation demands from the Jews nothing it would not demand from all its citizens. If the Jews, however, continue acting as if building a 'state within the state' and frustrating German expectations of their assimilation, they may provoke not only the reversal of legal emancipation but also anti-Jewish pogroms.

Direct responses to these aspects of Treitschke's discourse were few. *Naudh* argued straightforwardly that the Jews are 'a distinct people, not a religious sect' and form 'a nation within the nation'. They need to be treated as a foreign, conquering nation; not individual Jews, but the Jews as a people are evil, and specific legislation dealing with them is necessary. In the first place it ought to restrict economic freedoms and freedom of movement. Similarly, Endner demanded resettlement and 'productivization' of the Jews.

*Bresslau* reproached Treitschke for having failed to make any specific suggestions for how to solve the 'Jewish question': Treitschke merely repeated old accusations that would help making the existing barriers higher and stronger. Bresslau agrees about what is 'evil and mean' within Jewry and what needs to be fought. However, this fight can only be fought together if Treitschke lends his support to defend Jewish honour. Bresslau's own practical suggestion is that representations of Jews in literature or on stage be modeled on the middle class normality of German Jewry.

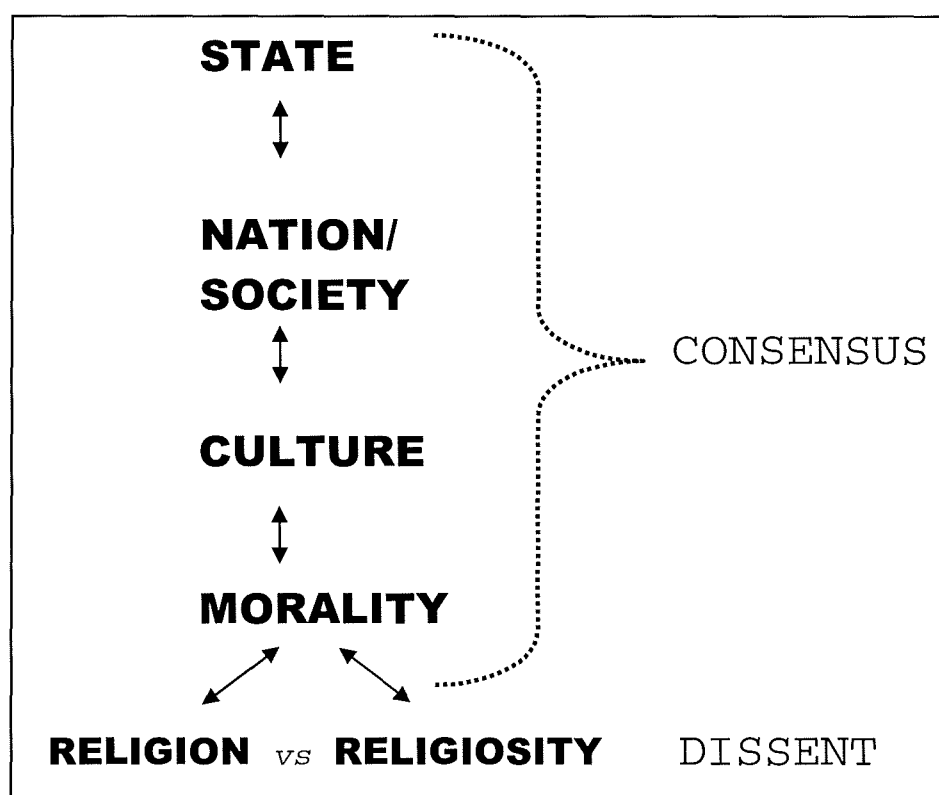
*Mommsen* reproached *Treitschke* for having violated a specific duty that the 'better part of the nation' has towards nation-building: the duty to hold down 'sentiments of difference' felt by other members of the nation. *Mommsen* holds that it is crucial to the process of the nation's maturing towards self-government that its representatives are able to discuss the 'idiosyncracies' of 'particular tribes and nations' within the nation with 'moderation and forbearance'. The nation owes to itself the protection of the Jews' religion and peculiarity, irrespective of their conduct. However, *Mommsen* warns that the state cannot do more than to warrant legal equality: 'we' – i.e. the national-liberal élite – cannot defend the Jews from popular hostility based on a sense of difference. Since Christianity still defines international civilization, the Jews' refusal to convert remains a dangerous and difficult personal choice. His only practical suggestion is that in order not to provoke a civil war that would endanger the Jews as well as national unity, Jews need to understand their obligation to practice their religion in private, not in public. They ought to give up all not strictly religious communal Jewish institutions that could be interpreted by others as expressions of an anachronistic national particularism.

*Bamberger's* position is in this respect not very different from *Mommsen's*. He holds that *Treitschke* acted with the best patriotic intentions, but these were frustrated by *Treitschke's* assertions about the detrimental influence of the German Jews and his failure to reject the anti-Semitic agitation. *Treitschke's*, and more generally the anti-Semites' indictments can be expected to reinforce separatist sentiments on the side of the German Jews wherever such sentiments still exist. They damage the process of nation-building. *Bamberger's* argument rests on a distinction between *Treitschke's* good (liberal) intentions and an anachronistic, anti-Jewish 'intellectual tendency'. *Bamberger* appreciates *Treitschke's* concern with restoring Christian religion as a bulwark against the threat of social-democracy, but has reservations as to whether it is feasible to defend bourgeois order with the help of religion. However, *Bamberger* insists it should be done without attacking the Jews since they are allies of order and respectability, not of disorder and socialism.

### 3.2 Dissent and consensus

The discussion and analysis of the multiple and complex *differences* between the positions held in the dispute has also produced a sense of a *consensus* shared by all involved – a consensus on what there is that needs, deserves or can be discussed, and what does not need to be discussed.

Foremost, of course, there is a consensus that the nation-state is the form of state most adequate to modern society, and that this form of state and society needs to warrant its cohesion through some form of national culture, including a sense of morality. Furthermore, there is a general sense that morality is in some way implicated with religion. However, opinions vary whether national culture implicates a shared (positive) *religion* or merely general *religiosity*:



Conceptions of 'culture' are as if on a sliding scale, with one extreme being a monolithic, racial concept of culture, a majority opinion that culture is based on an 'amalgam', and the opposite pole holding that culture is, and ought to be, 'mixed' and open-ended. Those who think that culture is an 'amalgam' think, or

at least seem not to reject, that there is a point when enough 'mixing' has taken place, i.e. when the amalgam is a *quasi* 'pure' culture.

There is very little opposition to the notion that immigration by 'Eastern Jews' challenges the sense of who the members of the nation are. The dissent is about whether or not the immigrants are numerous enough to cause a problem.

The movement that refers to itself with the neologism 'anti-Semitic' is understood by National Liberals (with the exception of Treitschke) as a threat to national unity: the nationalism of the anti-Semites is dangerous because 'exaggerated' (which echoes, however, Treitschke's rejection of pan-Germanism and pan-Slavism), although criteria for what exactly constitutes 'exaggerated' nationalism are impossible to establish. 'Exaggerated' nationalism turns on the nationalist endeavor itself. It is in this sense that anti-Semites appear as 'enemies of the *Reich*' and of National Liberalism.

There is a consensus that some groups are 'too different' to be included in the nation. It is unclear, however, where exactly the threshold of difference is which members of the nation ought not to trespass. The defenders of the Jews argue either that the Jews are less different than the anti-Semites claim, or that despite their being different they are not numerous enough to do much damage, and also that they constitute not the only (or not even the most pressing) problem: other groups (Catholics, socialists) are more different as well as more numerous, i.e. more dangerous.

Furthermore, there is a general consensus (excluding only Naudh and Endner) that 'spirit' ought to prevail over 'matter'. The adoption or condemnation of the demand for 'racial unity' is dependent on whether reference to 'race' is deemed to be compatible with a general framework of idealism (Cohen, Treitschke) or whether it means succumbing to 'materialism' (Lazarus).

There is a clearly articulated clash of opinions between, on the one hand, Treitschke's concern about the 'Jewish' (i.e. modern capitalist) threat to the Germans' 'good-natured willingness to work' and, on the other hand, the support for market-capitalism and utilitarian ethics.

There is a consensus that there is progress in the evolution of religion, but there is dissent about whether each step invalidates all previous ones, or whether the remnants of earlier stages in the development remain valid and legitimate, or will remain valid only until a perfect synthesis will have been reached.

There is a consensus that 'the particular' needs to feed into, and to be overcome by the *quasi*-universal (the nation), and that the universal and the historically relative need to be mediated. Civic rights as well as political forms and institutions need to be mediated with historically specific national-cultural traditions. The dissent is over which side in this process ought to prevail.

All in all it seems that the contradiction between Treitschke's 'undoubtedly good intentions' and their adverse effects are connected in ways that the liberal critics of anti-Semitism are not able to pin down. The suggestion by the priest and converted Jew, Paulus Cassel (a Conservative rather than a Liberal), that a society in which revoking Jewish emancipation is publicly being considered indicates that there is a more general lack of liberty in that society, was not considered worthy of discussion by anyone.

The *Streit* is crucially about the inclusionary and exclusionary tendencies inherent in the nation-form. As long as state and society are constituted in the form of 'the nation', some degree of cultural homogeneity tends to be enforced which means there is inevitably some form of (more subtle or more open) pressure towards socio-cultural assimilation. If a relevant minority appears not to be assimilating to the extent that they are expected to, representatives of the established national culture tend to draw one of three conclusions:

- the members of the minority are *prevented* from assimilating by circumstance (the classic position taken by Enlightenment figures such as Dohm and Humboldt that is echoed by Mommsen, Bresslau and other liberal critics of Treitschke to the extent that they admit that the Jews are still lacking Germanness);
- they are *unwilling* to assimilate (the dominant theme of Treitschke's contributions); or:
- they are *unable* to assimilate (the 'racist' position held by Naudh and Endner, by Treitschke sometimes).

These three interpretations have different practical implications but work towards the same political end, the consolidation of nation-building. Treitschke endorses anti-Semitism because he expects it will accelerate the assimilation of the German Jews (objective *One*) and strengthen national consciousness of all Germans (objective *Two*). The tension in his argument between whether or not he believes Jewish assimilation to be possible implies that objective *Two* can still be achieved independently from objective *One*: if inclusion does not work, exclusion will. Mommsen, Cohen and others do not want objective *Two* to be realized *without* objective *One*. Treitschke's liberal critics oppose anti-Semitism primarily because they think it weakens national unity. Statements that reject anti-Semitism for other reasons than its adverse implications for nation-building are few and far between.

A discussion of liberalism needs to differentiate between the presuppositions of the liberal 'world view' and the more practical propositions of liberal politics; they do not necessarily – and perhaps not even typically – come in a package. Invocations of progress, civilization, 'industry and liberty' and social harmony can in practice mean very different things. A look at the beginnings of the political concept of liberalism in the context of the French Revolution shows that it is best characterized – in the modern context – as the predominant centrist position in opposing simultaneously reaction and (revolutionary, democratic or socialist) radicalism. The advent of modern class society as shaped by industrial capitalism led to a redefinition of the liberal notion of social harmony and how it was to be secured.

German National Liberalism – to which Treitschke, Bamberger, Mommsen and Oppenheim adhered – emerged from the experience in 1848 that the liberal vision of society being transformed without extreme and sudden political change was impossible to realize unless in a coalition with the traditional ruling classes, because democratic populism was ready to take advantage of any power vacuum caused by a defeat of the aristocracy. The National Liberal conception entrusted the Prussian state with the destruction of traditional power structures in the German *Einzelstaaten* without allowing a power vacuum to emerge. Although Prussia was not bourgeois in political form and appearance, it would be able to do that – so they thought – because Prussian society and bureaucracy were more

modern than those of most *Einzelstaaten*. The emergence of unexpectedly strong popular democratic forces in 1848/49 that only the Prussian 'warrior state' was able to defeat shaped the National Liberal outlook. Its vacillation reflected the Janus character of the Prussian state and society, and it could accommodate a range of positions, from Treitschke's emphasis on the importance of the state as a 'sittliche' force to the 'Manchester' liberalism of Bamberger and Oppenheim.

National Liberals assumed that the modernizing dynamic of national unification would *quasi* automatically transform and modernize non-bourgeois political forms. Therefore, a 'realpolitische' alliance with the representatives of such forms (Bismarck in particular) could seem to be legitimate and of long-term benefit to the liberal cause. In the context of liberal *Realpolitik* the principle of the *Rechtsstaat* was repeatedly violated, as in the cases of the *Kulturkampf*, the regulations concerning national minorities (such as in Alsace-Lorraine) and the *Sozialistengesetze*. At the same time, enmity towards state-led social policy was equivocal amongst National Liberals some of whom advocated moderate state-socialist reform (as also pre-1848 petty bourgeois liberalism had entertained the notion of state-supported social harmonization). The continued existence of opposition within liberalism to 'English conditions' or 'Manchester capitalism' on the grounds that they undermined the harmony of national unity constituted an important ideological bridge between liberal and anti-Semitic nationalism.

The claim that a particular state is 'a nation state', or that the society, whose political form this state is, is 'a nation', is a claim about the congruence of a political and an 'ethnic' entity, whereby 'ethnicity' means 'culture' in the static (as opposed to dynamic and relational) sense of the word. The claim of nationality must be made sufficiently plausible through the existence or the creation of some ethnic-national 'culture', i.e. the (attempted or successful) reification and fetishization of society's *actual* culture – the ensemble of lived relationships between people – which is always fluid and contradictory, never fully and consistently 'national'. 'National culture' helps stabilize in turn the citizens' loyalty to the state and the unity and coherence of society, although *denying* that ethnicity is indeed relevant for its national cohesion can at times be a defining feature of the national culture of a society; this tends to occur in cases when a competing nationalism (from within or without the national context) is



articulated in strongly ethnic-cultural or racial terms (such as in the cases of Renan's statement on nationalism in the dispute over Alsace-Lorraine, or Lazarus' statement in the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*, or indeed Habermas' position in the West German *Historikerstreit* in the 1980s).<sup>575</sup>

The German state of 1871 was founded before a strong national consciousness became common currency amongst most of the population. The founding of the state was therefore followed by a strong effort of 'internal nation building'. Its bearer was less the *Reich* – given its federal structure – than the dynamic of economic unification and modernization of society. When industrial and agrarian crisis set in (in the 1870s), the relevance of the state inevitably increased as a force that could – in the national framework – lessen some of the phenomena of crisis. To the same extent, however, that the crisis increased the importance of the state it also undermined some of its credibility and strength (which relied in the first place on prosperity and economic security); the more precarious the latter became, the more national coherence had to be increased through emphasis not on material but on national-cultural values.

Despite the extent of secularization that is characteristic of the process of modernization, cultural and moral values were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and arguably still are) impossible to conceive of without reference to religion. In the context of Enlightenment liberalism, the toleration of religious difference was connected to the expectation that a reformed, rational and universal form of religiosity would emerge that would underpin modern civilization, morality and legality. The toleration of traditional, positive (especially revealed) religion was understood to serve, or at least not to obstruct, the pursuit of modern, rational religiosity.

This tension was exacerbated by the fact that in the age of confessionalization of (Christian) religion in Europe, positive religion functioned more than ever before as a form of political ideology and was implicated in the process of early modern, i.e. pre- (or proto-)nationalist state formation. The emergence of the modern concept of religiosity (that tends to reduce positive religion to mere 'vehicles of religiosity') is paralleled by the clericalization of religion and the increased importance of the socially ordering function of clerical control and

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<sup>575</sup> Cp. for example Fine 1994

hierarchy. However, religious belonging – like that from descent or ethnicity – has never been coextensive with state territory, and the more religion served as a unifying force in the service of national state and society, the more it also became a divisive force.

The modernizing Prussian state that was not (yet) a national state was not (yet) committed to enforcing assimilation and cultural homogeneity, either: most Prussian governments before 1848 found the continued existence of a separate Jewish community more beneficial than its abolition. Only the modern sovereign nation state (as it constituted itself unequivocally first in the American and French revolutions) made the abolition of '[e]states within the state' a matter of explicit policy. Emancipation of the Jews *as individuals* was in this context the flip side of overcoming the existence of 'the Jews' as a separate corporate group or 'nation' (in the pre-modern sense of the word). Humboldt (1809) translated the concept of emancipation of the Jewish individuals as formulated in France twenty years earlier into the concept of the 'amalgamation' that still was a keyword for Treitschke, Mommsen and their contemporaries. Liberals in the period between the anti-Napoleonic wars and 1848 tended not to profess much sympathy for the Jews whom they considered anachronistic, unenlightened and alien to the emerging 'culture' of the German nation that they were working towards. It was only in the middle of the 1840s that Jewish emancipation became an unconditional part of the liberal program.

Taking their clue from the Catholic reaction to the French Revolution, opponents of the new order depicted the Jews as the latter's instruments or even its (hidden) conductors. At the same time, in terms of the enlightenment discourse on emancipation, Jews were attacked as anachronistic and backward elements that *hindered* modernization and the formation of the liberal national state and society. Insofar as the new order meant the capitalist transformation of economic relations, Jews were construed as embodiments of, or else as stumbling blocks to it. Insofar as it meant the nationalist transformation of political relations, Jews were construed as modernizing destroyers of traditional loyalty, or else as alien to the new unity of the nation.

For the 'anti-Semitism of the industrial age' the nation and the capitalist mode of production had become familiar and *quasi* natural aspects of current social relations. The Jews could be accused for any unwelcome aspect of their

normal workings as well as their malfunctioning. They were said to be obstructing their harmonious functioning as well as to have ushered them in in the first place. Anybody's notion of what constituted a healthy and desirable extent of capitalist modernity implied a complementary notion of what was *excessive* capitalist modernity – greed, materialism, usury, speculation, mammonization, predatory capital. The strategy of blaming that excess on 'the Jews' fitted into socialist or liberal just as well as into conservative or reactionary frameworks.

As is evident from the literature, the illiberal assertions of the liberal Treitschke (and also, to a lesser extent, those of his colleague, Mommsen) have thrown up the question about where Treitschke belongs in the larger historical narrative. Meinecke, Herzfeld and Ruggiero (quoted above in *chapter 1.4.3*) shared the judgement that Treitschke's thought and politics are part of the history of liberalism. The analysis of Treitschke's position in the context of his work, in the context of German 19<sup>th</sup> century history and in the wider context of the development of European liberalism confirms this judgement. The illiberal elements of liberal politics and thinking reflect liberal society's own contradictions.

### 3.3 The illiberal implications of liberal society

THE LIBERAL JEWS HAD TO EXPERIENCE AT LAST  
THE HARMONY OF SOCIETY WHICH THEY CONFESSED TO  
AS THE HARMONY OF THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY.  
(Adorno/Horkheimer 1997:169f/1971:152)<sup>576</sup>

DESPOTISM CAN DO WITHOUT FAITH BUT FREEDOM CANNOT. ...  
HOW COULD SOCIETY FAIL TO PERISH IF, WHILE THE POLITICAL BOND IS RELAXED,  
THE MORAL BOND WERE NOT TIGHTENED?  
(Tocqueville 2002 [1835]:280f)<sup>577</sup>

POLITICS THAT ARE STILL SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH  
[AN EMANCIPATED] SOCIETY OUGHT NOT, THEREFORE, TO PROPOUND THE  
ABSTRACT EQUALITY OF MEN EVEN AS AN IDEA.  
INSTEAD, THEY SHOULD (...) CONCEIVE THE BETTER STATE OF THINGS AS ONE IN  
WHICH PEOPLE COULD BE DIFFERENT WITHOUT FEAR  
(Adorno 1978:103).<sup>578</sup>

The problem of *difference* and *separation*, but also the *interdependence* of state, society, its culture and the individuals who are their members, needs to be discussed in order to get to the problem of why Treitschke, a National Liberal, welcomed and endorsed anti-Semitism, and why the liberals who criticized him nevertheless had to concede a significant extent of consensus between themselves and him.

For Treitschke, the Jews are a 'misfortune' because they threaten the precarious unity of national state and national society as mediated by national culture. Even those who explicitly invoke the concept of 'race' present racial difference as dangerous not in itself but because it refers (like a shorthand) to differences of cultural, religious, moral and economic behaviour. Whether such differences are considered to be 'immutable' (i.e. racial) or merely to be changing very slowly (over periods of thousands of years), is in practice of little relevance. Even the most radical racists are indeed concerned about the power of socio-cultural practices to corrupt the (allegedly immutable) racial essence.

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<sup>576</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer in '*Dialectic of Enlightenment*': 'Die Harmonie der Gesellschaft, zu der die liberalen Juden sich bekannten, mussten sie zuletzt als die der Volksgemeinschaft an sich selbst erfahren' (translation amended).

<sup>577</sup> Tocqueville in 'Democracy in America' (vol. 1, part 2, chapter 9)

<sup>578</sup> Adorno in 'Minima Moralia' #66. 'The German word here rendered with 'state of things' is *Zustand*.

Treitschke's opponents fail to reject his position conclusively because their thinking and their politics are rooted in the same dialectic of nation-state and civil society.

A state or a society that demands loyalty and 'identification' from its members (i.e. not merely the payment of tributes or taxes) tend to demand that ethnic or religious minorities should assimilate or convert. Although this is not an exclusive characteristic of modern state and society, it is evident that the relevance of such processes immensely increased in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and after. The increased relevance of cultural identification in the modern context gave the issue of Jew-hatred an equally increased and qualitatively new significance.

Most theories of the relationship of modern state and society assert in one form or other the separation of state, nation and culture as a given fact, or at least as a fair possibility that is worth working towards: the notion of 'constitutional patriotism' (Habermas) proposes for example nationalism (patriotism) be contained within the constitutional-political realm so that its 'cultural' and societal base remain non-national. The notion of 'cultural nationalism' (such as in Otto Bauer [1907]) rests on the complementary suggestion that nationalism be allowed to spread in the realm of culture but ought to, and indeed could, be prevented from influencing the non-national (or rather 'multi-national') state. Both conceptions assume – from opposite angles – that the state superstructure could reside in majestic independence above society and its culture. They fatally overestimate the possibilities of the practical separation of state and society, respectively state citizenship and membership in society and 'the cultural community'.

Any kind of liberalism has to be concerned about the ability of the state to function as a guarantor of the rule of law and – if necessary – of liberal reform. It has therefore to provide for all that is necessary for the state to persist and function. The state has to demand loyalty, but loyalty cannot be based on merely abstract citizenship. It is hard to see either how membership in the state on the one hand, and in the 'cultural community' on the other hand could be strictly separate, or, how the state could be fully separate from religion as long as religion remains an integral part of civil society, both as something handed down and as a constantly reproduced response to the social need for some form of

(transcendent) resolution of suffering that society fails (immanently) to resolve: 'you can sooner build a city in the skies than see a state endure without religion', as the anti-Semitic 'The German Guard, Monthly for National Cultural Interests')<sup>579</sup> asserted (quoting a formulation by Plutarch).

Religious difference that is firmly locked away in the 'chamber' of the private is easy to tolerate. When, however, as is the case with Treitschke, a strict public-private divide is rejected because the public realm is understood to refer to inner values (morality linked to religiosity) toleration becomes precarious. Treitschke articulates a contradiction that might appear as a departure from liberal *theory* but is intrinsic to liberal *society*. If this is the case, the real scandal is not Treitschke's position but the reality of liberal society itself, and it turns out to be a decisive weakness of liberal political thought that it presupposes conceptually the existence of separations that at the same time it presupposes not to exist.

The modern state assumes direct, unmediated authority over the individual, challenging and transforming traditional community. The legitimacy of this authority is supported by the claim that the state is the political embodiment of a new form of community that (logically, not necessarily temporally) pre-exists the state. This new form of community, the nation, is supposed to 'speak' through 'its' state as it also speaks through 'its' culture. The open-ended and dynamic character of actual culture is contained and partially denied by the claim that it is the expression of an imaginary entity – the national community – that is an abstraction from culture in its actual diversity: the claim that culture is 'national culture' is based on a fetishistic reversal.

State politics of toleration were and are always framed by discriminatory measures that warrant the superiority of the hegemonic creed. As Hage writes, the Christian variety (such as expressed in the English *Toleration Act* of 1689), the variety practiced in the Muslim empires (as derived from the *Shari'a* prescriptions about the treatment of Christians and Jews as *dhumma*, 'those to be protected'), the liberal policies of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 'multi-cultural' policies of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century all have this in common (Hage 1998:80). 'Where we empower

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<sup>579</sup> 'Die Deutsche Wacht, Monatsschrift für nationale Kulturinteressen – Organ der antijüdischen Vereinigung', July 1880 (1880:629). The quote is taken from an article on Stöcker's *Christlich-Soziale Arbeiterpartei*.

an agent to be tolerant, we empower him equally to be intolerant' (Preston King quoted *ibid.*:85) because '...when those who are intolerant are asked to be tolerant, their power to be intolerant is not taken away from them.'

In his 'Anti-Semite and Jew', Sartre writes that 'there may be detected in the most liberal democrat a tinge of anti-Semitism; he is hostile to the Jew to the extent that the latter thinks of himself as a Jew' (Sartre 1965:57). Sartre sees 'the anti-Semite' and 'the democrat' as complementary forces: 'the former wishes to destroy him [the Jew] as a man and leave nothing in him but the Jew', while the latter 'wishes to destroy him as a Jew and leave nothing in him but the man'. 'The anti-Semite reproaches the Jew with *being Jewish*; the democrat reproaches him with willfully *considering himself* a Jew' (*ibid.*:58; italics in the original). Sartre argues that 'the democrat' aims

to persuade individuals that they exist in an isolated state ... in order to plunge [them] into the democratic crucible whence [the individual] will emerge naked and alone, an individual and solitary particle like all the other particles (*ibid.*:56f).

Sartre's image of 'the democrat' is intended as a polemic, but his notion of the 'democratic crucible' is still too optimistic: it fails to show that the 'crucible'—where the often mentioned 'amalgamation' takes place—does not produce 'abstract individuals' but *nationals*.

Modern society as we know it constitutes the individual twofold, as an 'abstract' and a 'concrete' individual. To the same extent to which *Gesellschaft* is always underpinned by some form of *Gemeinschaft*, the 'abstract individual' is always underpinned by a more specific identity whose 'characteristic role is to structure and limit the choices the individual makes' (Poole 1991:94). This becomes most visible in situations in which the individual is called upon to sacrifice a degree of his or her liberty (ultimately, life) for the 'common good' that could not be motivated or rationalized by recourse to a purely 'abstract' identity only. So far, no liberal society (and no liberal set of ideas about such a society) dared rely on the purely 'abstract identity' of its citizen-individuals only.

One of the crucial points in this context is which characteristics of an individual ought to be relevant for how this individual will participate in state and society, and which (cultural) characteristics are irrelevant (i.e. purely

‘private’), and whether the line between the two is solid, precarious or perhaps not existent at all.

The *separation-but-mutual-dependence* of state and civil society (the state’s re-creating society and society’s determining the shape of the state) produces a characteristic no-win-situation: if you declare you are not different from your fellow-citizens someone will show you are (which is – fortunately – always true); if you declare yourself different someone else will tell you that you ought to grow up now and become an equal member of society. A society where one can be ‘different without fear’ would be one where (‘concrete’) difference would not be over-determined by being the carrier of social structure, by not being the ‘border guards’<sup>580</sup> of social divisions. Difference needs to be emancipated from being carrier and signifier of social domination; ‘concrete difference’ freed from having to be ‘abstract difference’<sup>581</sup> would be a different kind of difference. Only the assimilation of the human world as it currently exists to the humane world that does not yet exist would create a situation where giving up the hard shell of given identity would lose the odour of treason that is founded in the hunch that assimilation today inevitably means assimilation to a false state of things.

It can be concluded from the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* that liberalism – as it implies acceptance of the nation state – has been unable to consistently refute and indeed immunize itself against anti-Semitism.<sup>582</sup> Modern political thought relied almost universally on the state as the guarantor of liberal progress and modernization, and a modern state that would not invoke some form of national culture to warrant its cohesion has never convincingly been conceived let alone practically realized. If it can be agreed

- that the persistence, as well as more specifically the reform, of liberal society depends on the existence of a *state*;
- that a state in the modern context can only be a *nation* state in which the construction of a national culture mediates between state, society and individual;

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<sup>580</sup> This concept is from Armstrong (1982), quoted in Yuval-Davis (1997:56).

<sup>581</sup> I use the words ‘concrete’ and ‘abstract’ in analogy to their use in Marx’ concept of ‘concrete’ and ‘abstract’ labour (cp. Postone 1996).

<sup>582</sup> The same is of course equally true of all forms of socialism that are based on acceptance of the nation state.



- that *national culture* consists of inseparably interwoven assumptions about morality, social behavior (including ‘the economy’) and religion;
- that religious and other cultural difference is being tolerated only on the condition that it is hidden away in the *private realm*, but that at the same time the *public realm* cannot do without invocations of religiously informed culture;

then ‘the better state of things ... in which people could be different without fear’ must within this framework perpetually remain a utopian dream.

From this perspective Treitschke’s liberal anti-Semitism, in combination with the ambivalence of his liberal-patriotic critics and the brutal frankness of the confessing racists who translated Treitschke’s ambiguity into support for their cause, can – against the intentions of all of the above – be put to work for the critical understanding of the limits of liberal society.<sup>583</sup>

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<sup>583</sup> I have in mind here a remark by Leo Löwenthal: ‘I wrote my PhD thesis on Franz von Baader, the most conservative philosopher imaginable around the turn from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And still today I am deeply impressed by the actually critical elements in conservative theory, which basically criticises and discloses whatever is bad about liberalism (was schlecht ist am Liberalismus) ...’ (Löwenthal 1990:301, from an interview with Matthias Greffrath).

## 4. Appendices

### 4.1 Treitschke's 'Our prospects' (November 1879)<sup>584</sup>

Among the symptoms of a great change in mood in the German nation, none appears so strange as the violent movement against the Jews. Until a few months ago, the notorious 'reverse Hep-Hep call' was still dominant in Germany. About the national shortcomings of the Germans, the French, and all other nations everybody could freely say the worst things; but if somebody dared to speak in just and moderate terms about some undeniable weakness of the Jewish character, he was immediately branded as a barbarian and a religious persecutor by nearly all of the newspapers. Today we have already come to the point where the majority of the Breslau voters - obviously not in wild excitement but with quiet deliberation - conspired not to elect a Jew to the [Prussian] diet under any circumstances. Anti-Semitic societies are formed, the 'Jewish Question' is discussed in noisy meetings, a flood of anti-Semitic pamphlets appears on the market. There is only too much of dirt and brutality in these doings, and it is impossible to suppress one's disgust when one notices that some of these incendiary pamphlets obviously come from Jewish pens. It is well known that since Pfefferkorn and Eisenmenger there were always many former Jews among the most fanatical Jew-eaters. But is there really nothing but mob brutality and business envy at the bottom of this noisy activity? Are these outbreaks of a deep, long-suppressed anger really only a momentary outburst, as hollow and irrational as the Teutonic Antisemitism of 1819? No - the instinct of the masses has in fact clearly recognized a great danger, a serious sore spot of the new German national life; the current word 'the German Jewish question' is more than an empty phrase.

If the English and the French talk with some disdain of the prejudice of the Germans against the Jews we must reply to them: 'you don't know us; you live in happier circumstances which make the rise of such "prejudices" impossible'.

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<sup>584</sup> This is the closing section of Treitschke's article in *Preussische Jahrbuecher* from November 1879 which provoked the ensuing debate. This translation by Helen Lederer appeared (without date) as part of the series 'Readings in Modern Jewish history' (containing all of Treitschke's major contributions to the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* as they were re-published as a brochure in 1881), edited by Ellis Rivkin and published by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. The translation is reprinted here with the kind permission of the Hebrew Union College.

The number of Jews in Western Europe is so small that they cannot have any noticeable influence upon the morality of the nation. But our country is invaded year after year by multitudes of assiduous trouser-selling youths from the inexhaustible cradle of Poland, whose children and grand-children are to be the future rulers of Germany's exchanges and Germany's press. This immigration grows visibly in numbers and the question becomes more and more serious how this alien nation can be assimilated. The Jews of the Western and Southern European countries belong mostly to the Spanish branch which looks back on a comparatively proud history and which always adjusted comparatively easily to the Western way of life. In fact, the great majority of them have become good Frenchmen, Englishmen, Italians, as far as can be expected from a people of such pure blood and such distinct peculiarity. We Germans, however, have to deal with Jews of the Polish branch, which bears the deep scars of centuries of Christian tyranny. According to experience they are incomparably more alien to the European, and especially to the German national character.

What we have to demand from our Jewish fellow-citizens is simple: that they become Germans, regard themselves simply and justly as Germans, without prejudice to their faith and their old sacred past which all of us hold in reverence; for we do not want an era of German-Jewish mixed culture to follow after thousands of years of German civilization. It would be a sin to forget that a great number of Jews, baptized and unbaptized, Felix Mendelssohn, Veit, Riesser and others, not to mention the ones now living, were Germans in the best sense of the word, men in whom we revere the noble and fine traits of the German spirit. At the same time it cannot be denied that there are numerous and powerful groups among our Jews who definitely do not have the good will to become simply Germans. It is painful enough to talk about these things. Even conciliatory words are easily misunderstood here. I think, however, some of my Jewish friends will admit, with deep regret, that recently a dangerous spirit of arrogance has arisen in Jewish circles and that the influence of Jewry upon our national life, which in former times was often beneficial, has recently often been harmful. I refer the reader to *The History of the Jews* by Graetz. What a fanatical fury against the 'arch enemy' Christianity, what deadly hatred just of the purest and most powerful exponents of German character, from Luther to Goethe and Fichte! And what hollow, offensive self-glorification! here it is proved with

continuous satirical invective that the nation of Kant was really educated to humanity by the Jews only, that the language of Lessing and Goethe became sensitive to beauty, spirit, and wit only through Börne and Heine! Is there any English Jew who would dare to slander in such manner the land which guards and protects him? And this stubborn contempt for the German *goyim* is not at all the attitude of a single fanatic. There is no German city which does not count many honest, respectable Jewish firms among its merchants. But it cannot be denied that the Jews have contributed their part to the promoting business with its dishonesty and bold cupidity, that they share heavily in the guilt for the contemptible materialism of our age which regards every kind of work only as business and threatens to suffocate the old simple pride and joy the German felt in his work. In many thousands of German villages we have the Jewish usurer. Among the leading names of art and science there are not many Jews. The greater is the number of Semitic hustlers among the third rank talents. And how firmly this bunch of litterateurs hangs together! How safely this insurance company for immortality works, based on the tested principle of mutuality, so that every Jewish poetaster receives his one-day fame, dealt out by the newspapers immediately and in cash, without delayed interest.

The greatest danger, however, is the unjust influence of the Jews in the press - a fateful consequence of our old narrow-minded laws which kept the Jews out of most learned professions. For ten years public opinion in many German cities was 'made' mostly by Jewish pens. It was a misfortune for the Liberals, and one of the reasons of the decline of the party, that their papers gave too much scope to the Jews. The present weakness of the press is the necessary reaction against this unnatural state of things. The little man is firmly convinced now that the Jews write everything in the newspapers and he will not believe anything they say any longer. Our newspapers owe much to the Jewish talent. The acuteness and nimble quickness of the Jewish mind found the arena of the press always a congenial field. But here, too, the effect was two-edged. Börne was the first to introduce into our journalism the peculiar shameless way of talking about the fatherland off-hand and without any reverence, like an outsider, as if mockery of Germany did not cut deeply into the heart of every individual German. To this was added that unfortunate busybody '*me too*' attitude, which has to have a hand in everything and does not even refrain from passing judgment on the inner

affairs of the Christian churches. What Jewish journalists write in mockery and satirical remarks against Christianity is downright revolting, and such blasphemies are offered to our people as the newest acquisitions of 'German' enlightenment: the moment emancipation was gained the Jews insisted boldly on their 'certificate', demanded literal parity in everything, forgetful of the fact that we Germans are, after all, a Christian nation, and the Jews are only a minority. It has happened that the removal of Christian pictures was demanded, and even the celebration of the Sabbath in mixed schools.

If we consider all this - and much more could be added - then the noisy agitation of the moment appears only as a brutal and spiteful but natural reaction of the Germanic national consciousness against an alien element which has usurped too much space in our life. It has at least the one involuntary merit of having liberated us from the ban of a tacit falsehood.

It is already a gain that an evil which everybody sensed but which nobody wanted to touch is now discussed openly. Let us not deceive ourselves: the movement is deep and strong. A few jokes about the words of wisdom from the mouths of Christian-Socialist soap box orators will not be sufficient to suppress it. Even in the best educated circles, among men who would reject with horror any thought of Christian fanaticism or national arrogance, we hear today the cry, as from one mouth, 'the Jews are our misfortune!'

There can be no talk among the intelligent of an abolition or even a limitation of the Emancipation. That would be an open injustice, a betrayal of the fine traditions of our state, and would accentuate rather than mitigate the national contrasts. What made the Jews of France and England harmless and often beneficent members of society was at the bottom nothing but the energy of the national pride and the firmly rooted national way of life of these two nations which look back on centuries of national culture. Ours is a young nation. Our country still lacks national style, instinctive pride, a firmly developed individuality; that is the reason why we were defenseless against alien manners for so long. But we are in the process of acquiring these qualities, and we can only wish that our Jews recognize in time the change which is now occurring in Germany as a necessary consequence of the foundation of the German state. In some places there are Jewish societies against usury which silently do much good. They are the work of intelligent

Israelites who have recognized that their fellow-Jews must adjust to the customs and ideas of their Christian fellow-citizens. Much remains to be done in this direction. It is not possible to change the hard German heads into Jewish heads. The only way out therefore is for our Jewish fellow-citizens to make up their minds without reservations to be Germans, as many of them have done already long ago, to their advantage and ours. There will never be a complete solution. There has always been an abyss between Europeans and Semites, since the time when Tacitus complained about the *odium generis humani*. There will always be Jews who are nothing else but German - speaking Orientals. There will also always be a specifically Jewish education; and, as a cosmopolitan power, it has a historical right to existence. But the contrast can be mitigated if the Jews, who talk so much about tolerance, become truly tolerant themselves and show some respect for the faith, the customs, and the feelings of the German people which has long ago atoned for old injustice and given them human and civil rights. The lack of such respect in many of our Jewish fellow-citizens in commerce and literature is the basic reason for the passionate anger in our days.

It is not a pleasant sight, this raging and quarreling, this boiling up of unfinished ideas in our new Germany. But we cannot help our being the most passionate of all nations, although we called ourselves phlegmatics so often. New ideas never broke through in our country other than under bad convulsions. May God grant that we come out of the ferment and unrest of these exciting years with a stricter concept of the state and its obligations and with a more vigorous national consciousness.

## 4.2 Synopsis of the main contributions

### Treitschke 1896a: *Our prospects*

#### *a) Introduction:*

1. 19f: A general impression about the mood of 'the nation'
2. 20f: A first interpretive statement about this mood: it is directed against 'effeminate philanthropy'

#### *b) Main argument:*

3. 21f: Description of emerging anti-Semitic activities; the emergence of 'a German Jewish question' ('eine deutsche Judenfrage')
4. 22f: The specific character of the problem in Germany (as opposed to in 'the West'): immigration not of 'Spanish' but of Polish Jews
5. 23 - 26: The main argument: the demand for the Jews to assimilate and the necessity for Germany to defend herself against Jewish '*Geist*'

#### *c) Concluding part:*

6. 26f: Reference back to section 3: these arguments legitimate the nation's anti-Semitic mood
7. 27f: Reference to the concept of the state; the weakness of the German nation (as compared to France and England) necessitates a *specifically German* unequivocal stance on the Jews

### Lazarus 1880: *What does 'national' mean? A Lecture*

#### *a) Introduction*

1. 5-7: The occasion and the purpose of the lecture

#### *b) The academic discussion of the concept of the nation*

2. 7-18: On the concept of the nation
3. 7-11: The concept of the nation according to Boeckh
4. 11-15: Additional arguments concerning descent, language and spirit
5. 15-18: The nation according to Rümelin

#### *c) On Treitschke*

6. 18-22: Descent does not define the nation; the talk about blood has to be rejected as materialist
7. 22-25: Judaism and Christianity
8. 26-28: Judaism, the state and national economy
9. 28-31: The Jewish contribution to German intellectual life
10. 31-34: Jewish and German religious thought
11. 35f: The logic of generalization
12. 36-40: German nationality as an unfinished project and the world-historical role of the Jews
13. 40-44: Cultural diversity as a value in itself

14. 44-56: The proximity of the ideals of Judaism to those of Christianity and the modern state

*d) Conclusion:*

15. 56f: Self-criticism as a Jewish virtue

*f) Appendix:*

16. 57-60: on the statistical data on Jewish immigration and emigration in Prussia

Cohen 1965: *A Confession in the Jewish Question*

*a) Introduction:*

1. 124-126: ambivalent feelings about the necessity to 'confess'

*b) Main argument:*

2. 126-130: The Kantian 'scientific' concept of religion; commonality and difference between Israelites and Christians

3. 130f : The relation of nation, state and religion

4. 131-133: The affinity of Judaism to German Protestantism

5. 133- 39: A critique of Lazarus' concepts of nation and race

6. 139-142: A critique of Lazarus' celebration of diversity

7. 142- 44: The need for a 'sittliche' administration of the state as the root of legal emancipation of the Jews

*c) Conclusion*

8. 144-149: The relevance of religiosity for national unity

Treitschke 1896b: *Herr Graetz and his Judaism*

*a) Introduction:*

1. 29f: Nothing to take back

*b) Refutations of the refutations:*

2. 30-34: The statistical argument and its limited relevance

3. 34-36: The argument about the differences between two Jewish branches

4. 36: The Tacitus argument

*b) Restatement of Treitschke's rejection of Jewish 'national arrogance':*

5. 37f: The Jewish dispersal, persecution, emancipation and assimilation

6. 39-43: Graetz's arrogance against the Germans

*c) Conclusion:*

7. 43-46: recognition of Jewish nationality is impossible



Bresslau 1965a: *On the Jewish question. Letter to Herr Professor Dr. Heinrich von Treitschke*

*a) Introduction*

1. 52-53: Bresslau shows respect for and disappointment with Treitschke

*b) Main argument:*

2. 53-54: Meaning of the concept 'Jew'
3. 54-58: Origins of the current campaign in the Catholic press
4. 58-61: On the differing ethnic background of the Jews in Germany and 'the West'
5. 61-65: The culture of Germany and the Germanness of the German Jews
6. 65-68: The role of the Jews in economy and culture in Germany
7. 68-72: The role of the Jews in the German press

*c) Conclusions:*

8. 72-76: the Jews are developing into Germans, a process that should be supported through positive suggestions, not sabotaged

Naudh 1965: *Professors on Israel. Von Treitschke and Bresslau*

1. 180-3 The historical continuity of anti-Jewish attitudes as either active hatred or passive disgust
2. 183f : The concept of 'Bildung' ignores individuality and nationality
3. 184f: The liberal concept of 'equality' ignores racial difference
4. 185f : Christianity's relation to Judaism
5. 186-8: There is not a threat of mixed culture but of a loss of culture
6. 188-91: The Jews are an unproductive parasitic race having an immoral covenant with God
7. 191-3: The Jews' greater racial purity makes them dominate every other race they mix with
8. 193-195: The complementary relation between church and state
9. 195-9: Because the Germans cannot afford to feed too many unproductive Jews, legal-economic measures are to be taken following the example of Napoleon
10. 199-202: Additional remarks on the impossibility to reconcile nationalism with liberalism

Treitschke 1896c: *Some further remarks on the Jewish Question*

- 1) 47: Introductory remark

*On Bresslau:*

- 2) 47-51: The origin of the anti-Semitic movement in the context of Jewish emancipation
- 3) 51-53: The differences between the two 'Jewish branches' and Jewish emancipation in the French revolution

4) 53f: The Jews and the press

5) 54-57: The Germanness of German culture

*On Lazarus:*

6) 57-60: The relevance of religion – in particular Christianity – for nationality and statehood

*On Cassel:*

7) 60f: Christianity is not Jewish but has overcome Judaism

*Conclusions:*

8) 61-63: the Germans make themselves complicit in the degeneration of society unless they re-emphasize their Christianity

Bamberger 1965: *Germanity and Jewry*

*a) Introduction:*

1. 149f: Emancipation, assimilation and German self-destruction

*b) On Treitschke's intervention in particular:*

2. 150-6: Treitschke's declared intention of patriotic reconciliation is contradicted by a fundamental anti-Jewish sentiment

3. 156f: Anti-semitism is a covert form of struggle against liberalism

*c) Main theoretical argument:*

157-62: The concepts of nationality, indigenesness, tribe and race

4. 162f: The Germanness of the German Jews

5. 163f: The analogy of anti-German sentiment in Russia; its basis in the foolish assumption that those who get rich exploited society

6. 164-6: The mutual attraction of Jews and Germans is based on common inclination to spirituality and commerce

7. 166-8: The specificity of the German-Jewish spirit; Heine and Lasker as two model types of German-Jewish hybridity

8. 168-70: The incompleteness of Jewish emancipation in Germany

9. 170-5: The concept of the 'purity' of culture and the critique of religion

*d) Conclusions:*

10. 175-9: Relevance and effects of anti-Jewish sentiment and agitation

Mommsen 1965b: 'Another Word about Our Jewry'

*a) Introduction:*

1. 210f: The current debate as a suicidal tendency of nationalism; invocation of the community of the generation that accomplished national unification
2. 212f: The ethnic diversity of the German nation; its not exclusively Germanic character
3. 213f: The concept of the modern nation state as opposed to the ancient non-national state; the Jews in the modern German state are Germans as for their nationality in the modern sense

*b) Main argument:*

4. 215f: The building of a unified German nation is still in the process; the anti-Semitic campaign endangers this process by setting up a paradigm of disintegration and exclusion
5. 216-8: The Jews in their Jewishness are necessary and beneficial for the German nation because they are an element of decomposition of the tribal, pre-national order, i.e. conducive to the new national order

*c) Concluding part:*

6. 218-21: A discursive reflection on the actual if unintended disintegrative effects of Treitschke's text; the moral duty for civil peace while the process of nation-building is still incomplete
7. 221-5: Practical conclusions: the case of the 'Antisemitenpetition'; the legal rights of the Jews and their obligation to contribute to breaking down barriers within the nation

#### 4.3 The authors of the contributions to the 'Berliner Antisemitismusstreit'

*Heinrich von Treitschke* (1834-1896, born in Dresden, Saxony) was at the time of the *Streit* a member of the Reichstag (since 1871), a professor of history and (what today would be called) political science at Berlin University (since 1873), and (since 1866) the editor of the *Preussische Jahrbücher*. His outlook has been presented in chapter 1.4.

*Moritz Lazarus* (1824-1903, born in the Prussian province of Poznan), president (since 1869) of the *Second Israelitic Synod* (later renamed 'Verein deutscher Juden') (Langer 1998:307) was the first representative of 'the leadership of the established community' (Ragins 1980:29) to respond to Treitschke.<sup>585</sup> Lazarus was 'a devoted German patriot' but had at the same time 'an active interest in Jewish communal affairs' (ibid.). Lazarus' first published text ('On the ethical legitimacy of Prussia in Germany' ['Ueber die sittliche Berechtigung Preussens in Deutschland'], 1850) had been a 'hymnic defence of Prussia' (Belke 1971:XLVII) in which he argued that Prussia's cultural superiority warranted its political hegemony. The fundamental characteristic of 'Germanic national spirit' was the drive to assimilate all previous history into a harmonious synthesis. The 'German national spirit' constitutes the most successful amalgamation of the *Germanic* spirit with Christianity, and the *Prussian state*, dubbed 'the state of intelligence', was its most adequate manifestation (ibid.:XLVIII).

Lazarus' academic standing was based on his having founded in 1859 (together with Steinthal) the 'Journal for psycho-ethnography and linguistics' ('*Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft*').<sup>586</sup> Lazarus defined

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<sup>585</sup> In his '*An die deutschen Juden*' (fourth edition, 1887), Lazarus claimed that his speech 'What does national mean' (given on December 2, 1879, at a general assembly in the *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums*), was the first public reaction against the anti-Semitic current (Lazarus 1887:3). In '*An die deutschen Juden*' Lazarus defended his support for a coalition government that included anti-Semites because it was necessary that the left-liberal *Freisinnige* party be opposed because it was 'unpatriotic'. Lazarus rejects criticisms of his support of the right-wing coalition by downplaying the danger of the anti-Semites' influence on government policy with the comment: 'a state that has climbed the ethical height (sittliche Höhe) of the German *Reich* cannot possibly fall back behind that height' (ibid.:19).

<sup>586</sup> I translate *Völkerpsychologie* with 'psycho-ethnography' because it is concerned with the 'souls' of peoples, not with ethnographic aspects of the psychology of individuals.

the central category of the new discipline, *Völkerpsychologie*, the 'objective spirit (objektiver Geist)' or 'all-spirit (Gesamtgeist)'. Although Lazarus borrows the word from Hegel, the concept seems not to be exactly Hegel's: by 'objective spirit' Lazarus means 'all intersubjective (überindividuellen) articulations and objectivations of spirit (des Geistigen) in a community (Gemeinschaft)' and it is an empirical concept. Lazarus was closely associated with Dilthey in the 1850s (Belke 1971:L).<sup>587</sup> 'Objective spirit' (or *Volksgeist* or *Gesamtgeist*) precedes the individuals who are not creators, but carriers of pre-existing 'objective spirit'. Belke evaluates Lazarus positivization of Hegel's conception as an expression of the 'general longing for the concrete' that characterized the intellectual climate of the 1850s and 60s (ibid.:LV).<sup>588</sup> She notes that Lazarus was apparently not aware that his case for 'diversity' in his contribution to the *Streit* contradicted his own advocacy of Prussian and Protestant supremacy and his view of Catholicism as a 'retarding element' in German history (ibid.:LXVIII).

It was a crucial element of 19<sup>th</sup> century thinking that religious forms evolve and progress like other historical forms. Traditional Judaism did not share this notion (Liebeschütz 1967:132). The conservative historian *Heinrich Graetz* (1817-1891) (who taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary at Breslau) significantly broke with Jewish tradition on this issue: for Graetz the *historicization of Judaism* seemed the key to finding a way of being Jewish in the modern world without 'submitting' to liberal reform-Judaism which he saw would not help to emancipate but would rather dissolve the Jewish community. Influenced by Hegel and the German historicist tradition, Graetz aimed to challenge the liberal idea of Judaism as a 'modern religion of reason': reform as proposed by liberal Jews was harmful as well as unnecessary for the Jews in order to be part of modern society. While accepting the idea of slow and gradual development of religious forms (he considered the Talmud to be a mere

<sup>587</sup> Dilthey seems to have rejected Lazarus' *Völkerpsychologie* as too static and positivist, i.e. less 'historicist' than his own understanding of the *Volksgeist* (ibid.:LVII). Lazarus and Steinthal emphasized that they thought of the *Volksgeist* not as a 'mystical metaphysical substance' (ibid.:LIX).

<sup>588</sup> The *Völkerpsychologie* as founded by Lazarus and Steinthal is influenced by Comte's psychological sociology and more especially by the similar conception developed by Johann Friedrich Herbart in about the same period. Herbart emphasized the mutual determination of individual psyche and society (while he described society as if it was an individual 'soul' writ large) and the central importance of language and tradition (cp. Belke 1971).

transitional stage and not a definite authority) Graetz defended the unity of the religious and the national (ibid.:143). He aimed to defend Judaism as it had developed historically against what he saw as the imposition of religious forms taken from other contexts (Protestantism) much the same way as for example Ranke defended German political forms against the imposition of French-republican conceptions. Graetz's thinking presupposed the notion of a *Volksgeist* evolving through history that needed to be defended against sudden and non-organic challenges (although Graetz hesitated using the word because he was aware that it tended to signal an attitude hostile to Jews) (ibid.:151). 'His interest in theological problems was limited' (ibid.:152); his concern was the continuation of a 'Jewish existence' that maintained Jewish particular characteristics – including but not primarily religion – that was secular, i.e. (at least implicitly) national in character. Liebeschütz concludes that Graetz's 'view of the future of the messianic people had ... taken on the bourgeois forms of his century and his environment' (ibid.). Graetz was also decidedly *German-Jewish* and had no high opinion of Polish-Russian Jewry (nor of their language, Yiddish, nor of Chassidism): for Graetz, Judaism owed its re-emergence – from Mendelssohn's times onwards – to the German Enlightenment (ibid.:154).<sup>589</sup>

The quotes that aroused Treitschke's anger were from the eleventh volume of Graetz's monumental 'History of the Jewish people' (1870) in which he made abundant use of the (derogatory) term 'Deutscher Michel' implying that the failure of the Germans to achieve political liberties were due to their national characteristics (ibid.:153). The second edition of the book (1900) was toned down significantly.

*Ludwig Bamberger* (1823-1893) was born in Mainz, a place which at the time still had Jacobin and Francophile political traditions. The young Bamberger was a republican and supported a centralized German state modelled on France to be established by revolutionary means, but rejected Prussian hegemony (Weber 1978:244). He played a decisive role in an early split between liberals

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<sup>589</sup> Meyer suggests that Treitschke read the eleventh volume of Graetz's work just weeks before he wrote his *Our Prospects*, and sees the latter as directly triggered by the former. He writes that 'Graetz and Treitschke were remarkably alike in the manner of their historiography' (Meyer 1986:1). For example, reference to 'Jewish blood' is 'a racial element which is as prominent in

and republican democrats (April 1848) which won him the nickname 'the red one' and an invitation by the local communist *Arbeiterbildungsverein* to become a member (ibid.:245). Holding observer status as a journalist, he came to the conclusion in June 1848 that the Frankfurt Parliament would not bring about any change and he suggested mobilizing the population. Subsequently he advocated careful social reform and propagated a Proudhonist *Volksbank* project (spring 1849; Jansen 1998:207). Bamberger took part in the *Reichsverfassungskampagne* (May 1849) but dissolved his corps and fled to Switzerland on arrival of the Prussian troops in the Palatinate, partly to escape reprisals by the remaining insurgents for his premature capitulation (ibid.:247), partly because he was sought for high treason by the state. In this period, Bamberger strongly rejected the stirring of cultural-nationalist emotion (such as by Mazzini or Kossuth) and praised 'the healthy and simple logic of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*' (Jansen 1998:210). Subsequently Bamberger lived in London, Antwerp, Rotterdam and Paris where he became a multiple millionaire and could retire from business in 1866. Politically he turned from democrat to *Manchester* 'left-liberal' with no sympathies for state-led social reform (ibid.:249). The influence of Heinrich Bernhard Oppenheim (with whom he edited the official journal of the 'Deutscher Nationalverein', the 'Deutsche Jahrbücher für Politik and Literatur'; Pulzer 1997:8) convinced him that only Prussia could effect the creation of a unified nation state and the ending of *Kleinstaaterei*. In 1859 Bamberger advocated in a widely read pamphlet ('Juchhe nach Italia', first published anonymously) that German unification should be modelled on the example given by Cavour: Prussia ought to take advantage of the situation to push Austria out of the German League and to annexe the smaller German states. His new position was – and remained – that there was no social basis for an alternative process of unification. Bamberger joined the *Progress* party (like Oppenheim), returned from exile back to Mainz in 1868 (Weber 1978:250) and became a member of the *Zollparlament*. He argued that since the battle of *Königgrätz* (1866) the idea of a union including Austria was reactionary, but he was also critical of *kleindeutsche* over-affirmation of Prussian power politics as represented by Treitschke. He was convinced that the 'thousand year old culture

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Graetz ... as in Treitschke' (ibid.:6). Graetz refers to the Jews as *Stamm*, *Volk* and *Rasse* interchangeably (ibid.:10).

of the German people will absorb Prussia' (ibid.:251) once a unitary (i.e. not a federal) state allowed Prussia to dissolve all the smaller dynasties. This state would then inevitably evolve into a republic. He described Bismarck as the 'executor of the economic and national desires of the bourgeoisie' (quoted ibid.). As an expert on France, Bamberger worked as an advisor and publicist for Bismarck during the German-French war when he was instrumental in securing liberal support for the Prussian cause. He was amongst the supporters for the annexation of Alsace Lorraine and characterized the *Paris Commune* as 'a horde of clowns and cannibals (eine Horde kannibalischer Possenreisser)' (ibid.:259). At the time of the *Streit* Bamberger belonged to the left wing of the National Liberal party (Langer 1998:317)

A short, but very influential reaction to Treitschke's comments was the '*Declaration of the Notables*' that was published on November 14, 1880 in the liberal *Nationalzeitung* (Langer 1998:319)<sup>590</sup>. Its 75 signatories included Johann Gustav Droysen, Rudolf Gneist, Werner von Siemens, Rudolf Virchow, Max Weber Sr., the mayor of Berlin, Max von Forckenbeck (who seems to have initiated it [Hamburger 1968:34]) and *Theodor Mommsen*.<sup>591</sup> Mommsen published on 20.11. 1880 (in the same publication ) a letter that confirmed that the *Declaration* had been primarily targeted at Treitschke, and slightly later a detailed response to Treitschke, 'Another word on our Jewry'.

Theodor Mommsen (1817-1903) was a student of Johann Gustav Droysen and influenced by the latter's conception of history for which the search for unchanging 'laws of necessity' is a crucial aim (Hoffmann 1988:88). As a national-liberal, nation-building was a central concern for Mommsen. He commented in 1865 on the Prussian annexation of Schleswig-Holstein (where he was born):

<sup>590</sup> The *Declaration* is documented with the list of signatories in Liebeschütz 1967:341f. It was published one week before the Prussian Diet debated the petition that demanded curbing Jewish emancipation (the *Antisemitenpetition*).

<sup>591</sup> Like several others of the group who published the *Declaration*, Mommsen was also amongst the founding members of the 'Defence League against anti-Semitism (Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus)' (founded in 1890) which demanded (in the words of its long time president, Georg Gotheim) 'complete amalgamation (vollkommenen Verschmelzungsprozess)'. Due to this orientation, the *Abwehrverein* was not necessarily welcomed by most Jews (Brenner 1993).



If the great dream of 1848 should come true, then every means, including force, will be justified. Necessity and the nation both speak in the categorical imperative, and as the nation-state can heal every wound, it is also entitled to inflict every wound (quoted in Minogue 1967:72).

In August, 1870, Mommsen published an open letter in Italian newspapers asking readers to support the German war effort of 'defending the freedom of the continent against the common tyrant' (France) (Deuerlein 1970:230). In a letter from December 1877 Mommsen wrote:

Whoever lives within another nation has to assimilate to it, and the resistance (*Widerstreben*) to do so is as wrong as the hesitation (*Zurückweichen*) of those who let them get away with it (quoted in Hoffmann 1988:120).

In a letter to Treitschke, Hermann Grimm (a colleague of Treitschke and Mommsen at Berlin university) wrote that Mommsen had remarked to Grimm that 'as a chapter in your [Treitschke's] *History* it [Treitschke's text] would have been good and legitimate, but not as a journal article'. Grimm concluded that Mommsen would fully agree with Treitschke's articles if only he would take the time to 'sit down quietly behind closed doors' to read them (quoted in Hoffmann 1988:120). Mommsen confirmed in a related letter to Grimm that he agreed with his suggestion that 'we all share the basic attitudes' but insisted that 'the sun is reflected differently in a chamber pot and in a silver shield': '... on issues like this one, everything depends on how one says something, not what one says' (Hoffmann 1988:126f).

Mommsen exerted political influence on the German educated classes most importantly through his major work, 'Roman History' (1854-85)<sup>592</sup> which was widely read and understood as having political-normative implications. He saw the formation of the Roman Empire as a process of 'national decomposition' in the course of which 'the Greek and the Latin nationality find a peace with each other' that is based on 'the rubble of second rate peoples (*Völkerschaften*)' (Hoffmann 1988:89). Greek and Latin elements are the 'positive' elements of the new citizenry, while the Jews and others form the 'parasitical' Hellenistic-Oriental population of Rome. Julius Caesar faced the task of amalgamating the

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<sup>592</sup> The first three volumes were published between 1854-56, a fourth volume was never written, volume five appeared in 1885.

two principal 'nations', Greeks and Italians, that were destined to rule the Empire. The 'Barbarian' nations had to be destroyed, while the Jews – that 'peculiar, flexible but enduring people (merkwürdige nachgebige zähe Volk)' – played the part of 'as it were' a third party (Mommsen 1857:529f).<sup>593</sup>

Already then we find the distinct (eigenthümliche) antipathy of the Occidentals against this so thoroughly Oriental race and its foreign opinions and mores. Nevertheless, this Jewry (Judenthum) – although it was not the most pleasant trait of the nowhere pleasant picture of the miscegenation of peoples (Völkermengung) of the day – was a historical element that developed in the natural course of things.

Caesar (like Alexander before him) protected the Jews' 'particular cult (eigenthümlichen Kult)' against the hostility of local Greek as well as Roman clerics. He did 'of course' not intend to establish Jewry as a third nationality of equal weight but wanted to take advantage of two characteristics of the Jews: first, their indifferent behaviour against any state (the Jew – unlike the Occidental – had not been given the 'Pandora's gift of political organisation'), second, their tendency to adopt any nationality to a certain extent in order to 'wrap up (umhüllen)' their 'national particularity (Eigenthümlichkeit)'.

Therefore the Jews were as if made for a state that was built on the debris of one hundred destroyed polities and that needed to be fitted with an – as it were – abstract and synthetic (von vornherein verschliffenen) nationality. Already in the old world, the Jews/Judaism (Judenthum) were/was a powerful ferment of cosmopolitanism and national decomposition and for this reason a particularly legitimate member of the Caesarian state whose polity was nothing but cosmopolitanism, whose nationality (Volksthümlichkeit) was nothing but humanity (ibid.).<sup>594</sup>

<sup>593</sup> Theodor Mommsen, 'Römische Geschichte' volume 3, book 5, chapter 11 Berlin 1857 (second edition)

<sup>594</sup> Hoffmann points out that the notion of the Jews as 'ferment' or 'Gaerungsmittel' being instrumental to the development of Western civilization was already developed by Moses Hess in his 'Europäische Triarchie' (1841) (ibid.).

The first three volumes of 'Roman History' formed a narrative that culminated in Caesar's epoch, while volume five – written in a very different style – presented in thirteen chapters the histories of separate provinces in the Imperial time. Perhaps the most famous chapter is that on 'Judea and the Jews' that discusses the Jewish defeat by Rome in 70 AD as a result of the failure of the Jews to be integrated into the Empire. Mommsen emphasizes that while under Caesar relations were good, the subsequent combination of clerical restoration and a sentiment of Jewish-national exclusivity prevented any Jewish state-political development. Tendencies for secular statehood that could have controlled clerical rule were defeated by anti-secular popular movements (the Pharisees) (Hoffmann 1988:106). After the death of Herod the Pharisees achieved the abolition of monarchy and imposed Roman direct rule based on Jewish clerical – i.e. not political – self-government. As a result of the failure to develop secular political opposition to Roman imperialism, opposition to the combined rule by Rome *cum* 'self-rule' by the clerical

The fact that Treitschke used Mommsen's formulation, and thus associated Mommsen's view of the Jews with his own and that of the anti-Semites, seems to have been what prompted Mommsen to responding: Mommsen's contribution is dominated by the effort to dissociate the notion of the Jews as pictured in his 'Roman History' from anti-Semitism.<sup>595</sup>

*Hermann Cohen* (1842-1918) was born in Coswig (Anhalt) and studied at the 'Jewish Theological Seminary' at Breslau with Zechariah Fränkel ('the founder of Conservative Judaism') and Heinrich Graetz (Fischhoff 1969:107). After two years of studies he turned towards liberal Judaism in the vein of Abraham Geiger and studied philosophy in Breslau and Berlin. His publication 'Kants Theorie der Erfahrung' (1871) gained him a post in 1873 at Marburg university where he became professor in 1876. He was the first Jewish ordinary professor in Germany and held this professorship until 1912 (Hackeschmidt/Sieg 1994:161). Although he was 'affiliated with various Jewish organizations, particularly those concerned with education' his interest in Judaism arose only after 1880.

Cohen adhered to the notion of a close affinity between Protestantism and Judaism that he adopted from left-wing Hegelianism, in particular from Heinrich Heine's 'On the history of religion and philosophy in Germany' (1836).

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hierarchy was clerical-fanatical messianism. Mommsen emphasizes that the Judaism of the Diaspora developed differently because the Jews in the Hellenistic world remained central to Hellenic civilization; they enjoyed privileges but were also victims of popular riots (ibid.:108). Mommsen's main point is that the Hellenic Jews did not completely assimilate because the existence of the clerical state in Palestine and its 'cult of the temple' maintained their national identity *as a religious identity*. Mommsen compares the role of the Temple to the role of the Vatican in the present: the Roman state had to defend itself by crushing clerical-theocratic fanaticism just as the German *Reich* had to defeat ultra-montanism in the *Culturkampf* (ibid.:109). Hoffmann points out that the Roman Empire was not the secular quasi-modern state that Mommsen imagined it to have been, and the Jewish community of Palestine had little in common with the Catholic church in 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany (ibid.:112). Still, Mommsen's interpretations of Jewish history in the Roman context are extremely interesting as they illustrate his general political-historical conception, and (in the 1885 version, if much less so in the 1856 version) show remarkable attention to the internal dynamics of Jewish society.

<sup>595</sup> In his lectures on *Politics*, Treitschke paraphrased Mommsen's argument exactly in the sense Mommsen insisted his remarks on the Jews should be understood (Hoffmann 1988:98). Treitschke might in the context of the *Streit* have deliberately twisted Mommsen's argument in order to use it as support for the anti-Semitic discourse. Liberal defence of the Jews was henceforth vulnerable to pointing out the embarrassing fact that Mommsen himself had provided a formulation that subsequently became a central anti-Semitic slogan (Hoffmann points to references by Lagarde, Tritzsch, Ahlwardt, Hitler and Göbbels; ibid.:102).

According to Heine, Luther had managed to suppress the 'gnostic-dualistic elements of Christianity' by having recourse to the Hebrew Bible, which opened the space for the development of German idealism (Liebeschütz 1967:215). Luther had, in Heine's and Cohen's understanding, also created therewith the condition for Jewry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to liberate itself from the Talmud. Cohen published – shortly before the *Streit* – a hostile criticism of Lazarus' 'Ethics of Judaism' (ibid.:214).

Cohen supported 'the idea that the political unity of the nation needs to be firmly based on the spiritual, on the humanitarian content of religion' (Liebeschütz 1967:217). He saw his position as the continuation of the earlier liberal tradition that had 'understood [the formation of] the nation state and the ethics of German classicism as one undivisible task' (ibid.). 'Cohen remained an ardent German nationalist all his life' (Fischhoff 1969:114); during World War I he argued in a widely read pamphlet that German and Jewish cultures were identical and that therefore Jews everywhere ought to support the German cause (ibid.:115). He was also a steadfast opponent of Zionism (ibid.:129). In his later years, he became known as an advocate of universal manhood suffrage and a theorist of the 'sozialer Rechtsstaat' and 'ethical socialism' (Hackeschmidt/Sieg 1994:160).

Before Cohen published his response to Treitschke, he had sent him two letters that remained without answer (except that Treitschke in his second contribution made some dismissive and polemical remarks that seemed to be directed at Cohen's letters). Cohen's public statement against Treitschke seems to have been the first reflection Cohen ever published on the relationship of Judaism and German nationality (Fischhoff 1969:112).

*Heinrich Bernhard Oppenheim* (1819-1880) was a National-Liberal who published widely on law, politics and economics. In 1844, when he was a lecturer at Heidelberg University (where Ludwig Bamberger was one of his students), Oppenheim published a celebrated volume on international law, and in 1850 a 'philosophy of law and society'. In 1848 he belonged to the democratic left around Arnold Ruge and took part in the civil war in Baden, first supporting, then to the left of, Brentano. He spent eleven years in exile in Switzerland, Belgium and England. Subsequently he became a member of the *Progress* party

and from 1866 was a leading National-Liberal supporter of Bismarck (Hamburger 1968:267). He was one of the main contributors to the journal *Die Gegenwart* that had been founded in 1871 as a liberal discussion journal trying to bridge the divisions between the competing liberal parties. In 1872 Oppenheim published a controversial essay 'On the history of stock-market fraud (Börsenschwindel)' at a time when the 'Gründerzeit' was still generally seen as a time of economic boom. In his influential text on 'Kathedersozialismus' (1873)<sup>596</sup> he argued that trade unions were a corrupting influence on workers and academic theorists of (state-)socialism were a threat to academic freedom (ibid.:268).

His polemic against 'Stöcker and Treitschke' was Oppenheim's last longer publication – he died on March 29, 1880. Significantly, a large part of the obituary on Oppenheim (Braun-Wiesbaden in *Die Gegenwart*, April 1880) dealt with Treitschke and the Berlin movement. The obituary argued (reflecting views formulated by Oppenheim in the last weeks of his life) that religious as well as racial hatred are 'signs of barbarism, lack of culture or a regress in culture' (ibid.). Braun-Wiesbaden found it 'incomprehensible' that racial hatred can be formulated with reference to the national state since it had seemed that only some 'backward' countries in South East Europe would host such 'stupidity and passions'. He notes that 'we have to discover' that 'amongst us, too, the Germans, the people of poets and thinkers, and even in the metropolis of the German *Reich* and of German intelligence, there still exist remnants of the waning Middle Ages which poison the air and threaten to draw us down onto the same level as that Jew-eating mob in Bucharest and Jassy'<sup>597</sup> (ibid.:228). Braun-Wiesbaden relates that Oppenheim had observed in the last conversation they had had that every war 'destroys an amount of economical, moral (sittlichen) and intellectual (geistigen) cultural capital and leaves behind a certain degree of brutalization (Verwilderung)' amongst the victorious no less than the defeated. This is where Oppenheim saw the deeper cause of the current Jew-baiting.

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<sup>596</sup> This publication drew together several articles published since 1871 when Oppenheim first coined the term 'Kathedersozialisten'.

<sup>597</sup> Jassy lies in Romania.

Ludwig Philippson (1811-1889), a rabbi in Bonn, was the editor of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums, Ein unparteiisches Organ für alles jüdische Interesse*. In the period under investigation, the liberal *Allgemeine Zeitung* published numerous articles, comments and reviews (particularly of pamphlets and brochures) on the anti-Jewish agitation.<sup>598</sup>

Seligmann Meyer (1853-1925) was a rabbi in Berlin (Boehlich 1965a:244) and the editor of the journal 'Jüdische Presse'.

The historian Harry Bresslau (1848-1928) saw himself as a student of Droysen (Liebeschütz 1967:206). He was involved in a number of Jewish institutions but believed in the possibility of assimilation: 'the continued existence of Jewry was not a concern of his' (ibid.:207). As late as in 1878 Bresslau had closely co-operated with Treitschke in an election committee that aimed to replace a *Progress* candidate in Berlin by a candidate friendly to the government (ibid.:208). As Liebeschütz comments, Bresslau's letter to Treitschke is 'sober like the positivistic scholarship of which Bresslau became a master' (ibid.:212).

Manuel Joël was a (moderately conservative) rabbi in Breslau – he was the successor of the more liberal Abraham Geiger (Liebeschütz 1967:143) – and published in 1870 a 'pioneering work' on the Jewish sources of Spinoza's 'Theological-Political Treatise' (Smith 1997:xii).

Paulus Cassel (1821-1892, born in Silesia as Selig Cassel) was a Protestant theologian (he converted from Judaism in 1855) and worked for the Protestant *Judenmission*. He had briefly been (1866-7) a Conservative member of the Prussian diet. From 1868 to 1891 he was a priest at the *Christuskirche* in Berlin (Hamburger 1968:219).

Salomon Neumann (1819-1908, born in Pomerania) studied medicine at Berlin and Halle and became a general practitioner in Berlin in 1845 (Regneri

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<sup>598</sup> Most of these were unsigned or leader comments. It is assumed here that they were written by the editor, Philippson.

1998:132), He was – along with his lifelong friend Virchow – one of the democratically inclined members of the medical reform movement (ibid.:133) and a pioneer in social and health statistics. Neumann was a liberal<sup>599</sup> but close to the reformist workers association *Arbeiterverbrüderung* and later also to Social Democracy. He was also one of the founders of the *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* (ibid.:134). The initial publication of Neumann's refutation of Treitschke's claims about Jewish immigration ('The fable of Jewish immigration') in the summer of 1880 had little impact. Its second edition from November 1880, however, received a positive review in the *Vossische Zeitung* (November 12), was referred to by Virchow in the debate in the Prussian diet on the *Antisemitenpetition* (November 20) and then by Mommsen in his 'Another word...' (later in the same month) (ibid.:146). Treitschke was then forced to write a review (Treitschke 1965c) and publicly acknowledge that a Jewish immigration from Poland and Russia did not exist at the time.

*Moses Aron Nadyr*, the author of a 'letter from a Polish Jew' to Treitschke, introduces himself as a rabbi, apparently from Western Prussia; nothing else seems to be known.

Another contribution ('*Börne and Treitschke, Open letter on the Jews*' [1880]) is by an author who masquerades (or rather, ironically pretends to masquerade) as Löb Baruch (Dr. Ludwig Börne) and elegantly adopts Börne's radical-liberal language.<sup>600</sup>

*Naudh* (apparently a synonym for Nordmann) was the author of one of the most emblematic texts of racial, anti-Christian anti-Semitism, 'The Jews and the German state' (first published 1862 or earlier). He succeeded Wilhelm Marr in April 1880<sup>601</sup> as editor of the extreme but influential journal *Die Deutsche*

<sup>599</sup> Neumann was a city councillor of Berlin but it is not clear from Regneri's account whether he was a member of one of the liberal parties.

<sup>600</sup> Ludwig Börne had been born as Loeb Baruch in 1786 and died 1837.

<sup>601</sup> According to comments in the publication.

*Wacht, Monatsschrift für nationale Kulturinteressen – Organ der antijüdischen  
Vereinigung.*<sup>602</sup>

Nothing seems to be known about the anti-Semite, *Wilhelm Endner*  
(Boehlich 1965a:244).

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<sup>602</sup> The bound edition of the first year's issues (Berlin 1880) shows on the cover a different subheading: 'Monthly for national development (Monatsschrift für nationale Entwicklung)'.



#### 4.4 The response of Social Democracy to anti-Semitism

1875 was the year the Social Democratic Party (SPD) was founded, promising to become a consistent and nation-wide parliamentary force. Although in theory anti-liberal, it was in practice expected to be an ally for the democratically inclined wing of liberalism (Massing 1949:18) – obviously an alarming scenario for the conservative elite just a year after the electoral nadir of the Conservative party at national elections. Although there seem not to be any statements from the (then illegal) party specifically referring to the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*, a brief look at the party's position to the more general anti-Semitic agitation of the time is an illuminating and necessary complement of an analysis of the liberal position.

'The Stöcker movement was for the Social Democratic Party a matter of life and death' (ibid.:170). They sensed the conservatives were planning to transform the labour movement into a 'state-socialist' auxiliary against liberalism.<sup>603</sup> A few days after the anti-Semitic riots on New Year's Eve of 1880 in Berlin, the Social Democrats discussed the issue in a mass meeting and seconded a resolution resisting 'any curtailment of the civic equality constitutionally guaranteed to the Jews' (Massing 1949:170; Wistrich 1982:94).<sup>604</sup>

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<sup>603</sup> The anti-Semites aimed to speak at trades union meetings (taking advantage of the ban of the SPD) to present their ideas of social reform. They tried to exploit remnants of guild ideology amongst trade unionists. However, the workers' hatred of the government prevented the anti-Semites from gaining any ground. When during the elections in 1881 Bismarck leaked the suggestion that the ban of the party could be lifted if the Social Democrats were prepared to co-operate with the Stöcker movement they declined (ibid.:171).

<sup>604</sup> Although rejection of the anti-Semitic movement was unequivocal amongst Social Democrats, the occasional use of anti-Jewish stereotypes did occur; in *Der Sozialdemokrat* of January 1881 for example the phrase 'the Judaized outlook of the Imperial Chancellor' can be found (Wistrich 1982:97). The author points to the ennobling of the banker Bleichröder and sarcastically remarks – against the anti-Semites – that one should not only deplore 'circumcised Jews' but also the 'uncircumcised Jews', i.e. the capitalist establishment including the Christian-German state. It is difficult to determine whether such remarks were understood by readers as polemic against anti-Semites (which is probably how they were intended) or as a confirmation of an anti-Jewish stereotype. The problem of course resembles that of interpreting Marx's notorious piece 'On the Jewish Question' which was reprinted with an interpretive introduction in the same journal in the same year. Bernstein wrote a preface that aimed to explain why Marx's intentions had been opposed to those of the anti-Semites. The background to this was that in 1872, the Lassallean 'Neue Social-Demokrat' (then edited by Hasselmann who was excluded from the party in 1880 because of 'anarchism') had already printed some de-contextualized extracts – the most controversial passages from the second part of Marx's essay – in a polemic against Bernstein and the (Marxist) Eisenachers. The Lassalleans tried to make the point that 'even Marx' had been an anti-Semite in order to deflect from and legitimize their own practice of using anti-Semitic clichés against Marx and the Eisenachers. These two re-publications of Marx's essay were probably of more consequence than its initial publication. If – as is generally agreed – the Marxists were far more immune to anti-Semitism than any other socialist tendency, Marx's

*Der Sozialdemokrat* remarked in January 1881 that 'liberal indignation at anti-Semitism was misplaced' because it was itself a product of National Liberalism's chauvinistic 'arrogance' (Wistrich 1982:97).<sup>605</sup> Amongst the leadership of the party there were two lines of thinking about the anti-Semitic movement. Engels found the phenomenon 'contemptible' but saw it as a merely temporary creation by the government as an 'electoral manoeuvre' (ibid.:98). Bernstein insisted against Engels that the movement did have deeper roots amongst civil service, petty bourgeoisie and peasantry and urged taking it more seriously – which he did as editor of *Der Sozialdemokrat* (ibid.:99). He also introduced, however, the notion that anti-Semitism was a phenomenon of popular discontent that might in the future feed into socialist revolution. Bernstein's quasi-sociological interpretation of the causes of anti-Semitism did not, however, diminish Social Democracy's opposition to it.

The growing exclusion of anti-Semitic positions from the Social Democratic discourse seems to have been partly a reaction to the anti-Semitic movement, partly an element of the general shift towards a Marxist paradigm to the detriment of state-socialist as well as 'anarchist'<sup>606</sup> ideas. Both trends were helped by the anti-socialist legislation of 1878 which brought home to Social-Democratic workers and intellectuals the reactionary character of the German state, the demagogic character of 'Christian-Social' agitation and the necessity of securing autonomous organization on the basis of solidarity and democratically accountable party structures.<sup>607</sup> While in the mid 1870s even leading Marxists like Bebel and Bernstein had still paid their respect to Dühring, for example

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notoriously difficult essay seems (in the late nineteenth century context) not to have influenced readers in an anti-Semitic direction (even though some of its formulations, if taken out of context and read without knowledge of the text by Bruno Bauer to which they are a polemical response, can be read as anti-Semitic; cp. Hirsch 1980; 1982; Arendt 1973:64; Claussen 1994:107f).

Johann Most, one of the leaders of the Social Democratic workers who first humiliated Stöcker in his attempt to build a 'Christian Social Workers Party', was himself expelled from the party in 1880 for having come under the influence of the anti-Semitic 'anarchism' of Eugen Dühring. Most later became a leading figure in the anarchist movement in the USA (Massing 1949:219).

<sup>605</sup> It pointed out that Social Democracy also asserted the civil rights 'of those who help to prosecute them', i.e. Jewish liberals who failed to oppose the anti-socialist laws (such as Bamberger).

<sup>606</sup> In this context, 'anarchist' referred to individualist, anti-intellectual, elitist/anti-democratic 'direct action' tendencies.

<sup>607</sup> All these together must have had a decisive effect in undermining Lassalleanism.

(Wistrich 1982:49), by around 1880, tolerance of anti-Semitic and 'anarchist' positions had vanished.<sup>608</sup>

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<sup>608</sup> Wistrich notes that the last overtly anti-Semitic reference he found in *Der Sozialdemokrat* was from August 1882 (Wistrich 1982:48;362).

The Dühringians' attempt to have Engels' attacks on Dühring condemned by the party conference in 1877 backfired and led to their defeat, to the effect that Dühring's philosophy (a radical but unhistorical brand of anti-religious, anti-state positivist rationalism) lost influence on the grounds of being anti-Semitic. Engels' *Anti-Dühring* was published as a book in 1878 after having been serialized in the *Vorwärts* and been discussed on the party conference in 1877 (Wistrich 1982:49). Engels refers to Dühring's Jew-hatred as a 'superstition' and 'popular prejudice ... inherited from the middle ages' (ibid.:50). With this he managed to stigmatize Jew-hatred, but also prevented a discussion of the specific modernity of anti-Semitism. Engels' own leanings towards a 'positivization' of Marxism – of which the *Anti-Dühring* bears evidence – might have made him blind for the fact that Dühring also was a thoroughly *modern* thinker, promoting a trivialized version of Enlightenment rationalism and sociological positivism, not based on romantic dreamings of the Middle Ages. It seems that anti-Semitism in the socialist movement was brushed away by the Marxists rather than overcome, which might have helped it re-emerge in some sections of the movement after 1900. A consistent criticism of Dühring's nationalism and racism is absent from Engels's book.

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